MILITARY CHAPLAINS'

REVIEW

1974

MILITARY CHAPLAIN'S REVIEW

Homiletics

PRO DEO ET PATRIA.

CHAPLAINS
UNITED STATES ARMY

SPRING, 1974

PREFACE

The *Military Chaplains' Review* is designed as a medium in which those interested in the military chaplaincy can share with chaplains the product of their experience and research. We welcome articles which are directly concerned with supporting and strengthening chaplains professionally. Preference will be given to those articles having lasting value as reference material.

The Military Chaplains' Review is published quarterly. The opinions reflected in each article are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the view of the Chief of Chaplains or the Department of the Army.

Articles should be submitted in duplicate, double spaced, to the Editor, Military Chaplains' Review, United States Army Chaplain Board, Fort George G. Meade, Maryland 20755. Articles should be approximately 8 to 18 pages in length and, when appropriate, should be carefully footnoted.

IN THIS ISSUE

One significant need (and joy) of Army personnel and their families is to hear the Word of God proclaimed clearly and relevantly, with vigor and compassion, with hope and love. The community of faith gathers in the military, as in civilian life, to reflect on its history and to anticipate its future—to be cognizant of both who it is and Whose it is. It therefore needs strong pulpit leadership which inspires devotion and demands commitment.

In order to support and reinforce the proclamation of the Word of God in Army pulpits, a conference sponsored by the Chief of Chaplains was held recently at the US Army Chaplain Board which focused on the important subject of homiletics. Both civilian consultants and Army chaplains attended. This issue of the *Review* contains a partial report of what was stressed at that meeting. It is gratifying to note that an emphasis on homiletical improvement did not end when the conference ended. That emphasis is now being implemented by chaplains at the installation level. Chaplains with a sense of mission are seeking to improve their preaching skills in a variety of locally designed programs tailored to meet the needs of each unit and post.

In this issue Dr. Manuel L. Scott reminds us that effective preaching involves such basic evangelical concepts as repentance and faith. It also strengthens its listeners ethically and socially, so that they grow in grace. The popular preacher may in fact be ineffective. Basic to effective preaching, says Dr. Scott, is the preacher's sense of being sent from God with a mission to preach the Word. Dr. John Burke, speaking from a Roman Catholic perspective, also emphasizes this sense of mission. The preacher, says Dr. Burke, must believe that his preaching from the Word of God *can* make a difference in the lives of God's people; that the Lord acts through him. The present crisis of faith is in part a crisis of preaching. Renewal will come when preachers proclaim the Word as they experience it in their own lives.

Dr. Clyde E. Fant, in discussing the subject of communicating the Gospel, emphasizes that the preacher must be alive in two realities—the living Word and the living situation. To separate

himself from either is to undermine the possibility of communication. The encouragement to become intimately involved in both should come from the knowledge that the God he proclaims was neither too impersonal nor too embarrassed to live in both. An important part of being alive in the situation is to understand the congregation, says Dr. J. Randall Nichols, especially its willingness to value and share the ministry of preaching. Chaplains will find especially helpful in their ministries the "Communication Bill of Rights for Congregations" which Dr. Nichols placed at the end of his article.

Preaching is a potential to be developed rather than a problem to be solved, according to the final conference consultant, Dr. David J. Randolph. That potential can best be developed when the preacher understands the Christian faith as "event" rather than "object." In both worship and preaching, faith should be an event which *occurs*. A "happening" should take place in chapel services when God, the preacher, and the congregation meet.

The final article in this issue emphasizes the importance of being vitally connected to both the past and the future in order to live responsibly in the present. Written by Dr. Oakley S. Ray of Vanderbilt University, it reinforces many of the values which chaplains utilize in ministering to individuals caught up in and buffeted by a fast-changing environment.

<div style="text-align: right">

GERHARDT W. HYATT
Chaplain (Major General), USA
Chief of Chaplains

</div>

MILITARY CHAPLAINS' REVIEW

WHAT IS THE NATURE OF EFFECTIVE PREACHING?

Dr. Manuel L. Scott

I am extremely grateful for the opportunity to be here. I stress the word *opportunity* because the more I have been thinking about this conference, the more strongly I have been feeling the nature of my opportunity, as well as the nature of my responsibility. Most of the consultants come from situations where scholarship is emphasized and demanded. In my situation as an ordinary black Baptist preacher, scholarship is seldom desired. But I am delighted to be here because I am sure that the kind of people I serve in civilian life are among the people military chaplains serve all over the world.

I approach the subject of effective preaching with the stimulating awareness that whoever said that the trouble with the church is bad preaching was lipping a lot of truth. The reasonableness and "relevance of this indictment" is supported by something Paul Scherer said. "A Roman Catholic author," writes Dr. Scherer, "is on record as having expressed the opinion that if ever Protestantism should be found dead of an assassin's wound, the dagger in its back would be the Protestant sermon."

In order to progress logically in the treatment of this topic, two pertinent preliminary questions should be addressed. The first of these is the often asked question, "What is preaching?" Dr. Frederick Danker has provided a short but summational and significant definition which I have selected as an umbrella or premise for this presentation. "Preaching," says Danker, "is the proclamation of the Word of God to men by men under assignment from God." This definition is all but synonymous with the sentiment expressed by Paul to the Ephesian elders: "For I have not shunned to declare unto you the whole counsel of God." This definition is most inadequate for the nonverbal forms of communicating the Word of God, a matter that other consultants will address in this conference. I am appointed to deal primarily with preaching as proclamation.

It is also important to treat a second question: When is preach-

Dr. Scott serves as the pastor of Calvary Baptist Church, Los Angeles, California. Among his published works are *From a Black Brother* and *The Gospel for the Ghetto*.

ing effective? Far from what is frequently supposed, preaching is not effective when it merely entertains, excites and extracts emotions, exercises the intellect, entrenches the herald in the heart of the hearers, sustains attendance and attracts crowds, and maneuvers the auditors into monetary giving. Although seldom acknowledged, all of this can be accomplished with ineffective preaching. Nothing scores more deeply that man is "at the mercy of his animal organism" than his deceivability and gullibility.

Preaching is effective when it produces an ontological shock, calling forth that reversal of fate and revolt against the pattern of being which the Bible designates as repentance. Jonah's preaching at Nineveh is an illustrious illustration of this effect. Jonah's preaching threw a whole nation into reverse and left it with the peace that comes to pardoned penitents.

Effective preaching evangelizes, winning and sustaining members to the Christian movement. The authentic communicator launches his craft always with the Pentecostal incident in perspective, hoping that the Lord will again "add to the church such as should be saved."

Moreover, preaching is effective when it leaves its listeners ethically reinforced and socially improved. The people depart from their places of assembly with additional moral insights and imperatives and advanced sociability.

Effective preaching so informs and inspires those within its range that they "grow in grace" and "in favor with God and man." This is not to say that in every preaching experience all these consequences come to pass. It is to say, however, that whenever the divine pitcher steps onto the pitching mound he should throw one of these balls.

At least passing reference should be made to another fact, lest the preacher find his sense of failure too stinging and pricking. Preaching, you see, is not just pulpit, it is also pew. Gene Bartlett is strikingly correct when he asserts that "the preacher is engaged not in monologue but in conversation." A dialogical situation is indispensable for the making and maturation of disciples. Not even Jesus, acknowledged to be the Prince of Preachdom, could overcome the hazards of an inhospitable pew. The people of Nazareth had the rare chance of hearing Jesus preach in their church. Far from being converted, they were incensed at his message. "Half amazed and half annoyed, they short circuited his power by their lack of faith, stupidity and jealously." Mark inserts in his account the solemn and blunt words, "And he could there do no mighty work." What Paul expresses in his Epistle to the Hebrews is well suited for many situations. "The

word preached," Paul declared, "did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it."

Going to the core of our concern, the nature and requirements of effective preaching, it is crucial to consider the man, the method and the message. There is a 'Who' and a 'How' and a 'What' of preaching. Gene Bartlett, in his Lyman Beecher lectures at Yale Divinity School, makes a significant statement that illuminates this issue. "Essentially," states Bartlett, "the search for meaning in preaching centers in a few basic questions. . . . What shall we preach? Or again, How shall we preach it? Equally, in our time we have asked, To whom do we preach?" John A. Phillips, surveying the range of Dietrich Bonhoeffer's theology, stresses a similar idea: "The problem for theology is speech: what shall we say and how shall we say it; what has been said and how it may again be said."

I agree with Paul Scherer that in a matter as grave as preaching, scientific objectivity is a myth. My version as to what is required for effective preaching is offered in terms of personal pronouns. I strongly feel that an autobiographical account and a personalized testimony can raise many windows through which light on preaching breaks. This is humbly submitted with no claim to striking originality or unusual preaching successes, and with a recurring sense of frequent failure.

First, I stand always with a sense of being sent. The Johannine form of the Great Commission presides over and undergirds this mission to preachers: "As my Father hath sent me, even so send I you." "There was a man sent from God" is the only true authority for beseeching men as ambassadors of Christ. The preachers in my boyhood community sarcastically remarked against what they believed to be false prophets by saying, "Some went and some were sent. Those who went are making trouble for those who were sent."

This sense of being sent motivates me to careful and conscientious preparation of both the man and the message. Like E. Stanley Jones has said, "I work at preaching as if it all depends on me; and when I stand to preach I try to trust as though it all depends on God." I have a sense of accountability not merely to the congregation, the critics, the compensators and my own conscience; I am also deeply persuaded that I must give an account to him who gave the command, "Go preach."

This sense of being sent arms me with the awareness that I am not alone. Time and again, like Isaiah's suffering servant, the preacher feels as though he is "treading the winepress alone and of the people there is none to help." There are occasions, also, when Paul's complaint, "No man stood with me," is

applicable to his situation. An inescapable sense of mission can reinforce his conviction that Christ, his Sender, is the "Eternal Contemporary" and Companion. The Bible reminds him that Christ promised his disciples two things: they would get in trouble; and he would be with them.

I always take a dictaphone to the pulpit. This machine does not merely preserve for me what I prepared to say and the way it got said. It records for me those revelations transmitted by the Holy Spirit while I was in the act of preaching. I have come to feel what Peter felt when Jesus said to him, "Flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven."

In that familiar Bible story of the three Hebrew children in the fiery furnace, the king discovered that while only three were cast in, a fourth figure was also in the furnace. It always happens in any moment of influential preaching that the Unseen Helper whom some choose to call the "Wholly Other" appears on the scene and "enables" the moment.

In the second place, I require of myself that I preach with intellectual respectability, ethical stimulation and social relevance. I do not treat lightly and indiscreetly the fact that the God about whom we are bold to speak is the ineffable and infinite One. Thick clouds and great darkness gather about him. Christian worship is always a celebration of the mystery of the spiritual. We cannot "by searching find out God." "We know in part and we prophesy in part;" "We see through a glass darkly;" and "We'll understand it better by and by." Nevertheless, although our message links us with the super-rational, it also relates us to the rational. I am committed to the proposition that the most cogent way to capture men's hearts is to command their heads. With equal enthusiasm I embrace the idea that the triumph of religious endeavors is enhanced by the presence of tough-minded and dedicated intellectuals. Much that we label as irreligion, on close examination turns out to be irrationality.

There is no place in the Christian pulpit for what Plato calls, according to Elton Trueblood, "misology." "The misologist," writes Trueblood, "is a person who, having become discouraged by his inability in dialectics, concludes that careful reasoning has no value." Plato's summons has the ring of soundness for me. "Let us, then," in the first place, "be careful of allowing or admitting into our souls the notion that there is no health or soundness in any arguments at all." It is axiomatic, then, that the central items of the Christian faith can be intellectually supported. With reason, Trueblood tells us, we can detect error and defend the faith against attack.

With equal concern my preaching is aimed at calling forth conduct which is consonant with the Christian creed. There are just two sides to the Gospel, says an old preacher, "believing and behaving." Deeds alone are not sufficient, but without them the faith loses much of its dynamics. "The sense of God's presence," writes W. Adam Brown, "which is the crown of the religious life, reaches over into the sphere of ethics and glorifies it." The Incarnation which is the dominant doctrine in the Christian confessions is best extended through the craft of ethics.

Moreover, my preaching binds on me a solemn charge to address the hearers with an alertness to the fact that "No man is an island" or merely an individual. We are all social creatures, enmeshed in a network of relationships, the handling of which gives some design to our destiny. My heart's desire and prayer to God is that those who hear me will depart more fit to live with, possessed by a larger longing to live for others, and with a greater capacity for bringing healing and help to those for whom "misery is a way of life." According to John A. T. Robinson, the controversial Anglican Bishop of Woolwich, to be a Christian is to be "A Man For Others."

In the third place, I structure my sermons so that what is talked can walk. Preaching that is most effective is portable. Homiletics is, among other things, the art of systematizing what one sees and says to the end that it can be resaid and retold. A television commercial said of Hills Brothers' Coffee, "It's reheatable." About Jesus' preaching we can say: It was re-preachable. He structured his sermons so they could travel. He told so that hearers could retell. As far as we know, he never wrote a book, prepared a paper, or spoke from a script; like Elijah and Elisha and his forerunner "the Baptist," he was a non-writing "preacher-prophet." Some in his audience grasped his message so thoroughly that they were able to furnish material that has won canonical credibility and now constitutes the major portion of the four Gospels.

Knowing that what he said would be remembered and repeated, he studded it with one-syllable words and simple sentences; he drew from material that was familiar to his hearers and made use of the sights and sounds around him; he honored the logician's method of deductive and inductive reasoning; he depended little, if at all, on audible responses; and he had as a background for his preaching a life so unspotted that it was difficult for even his enemies to accuse him of sin.

He intended his hearers to become transmitters as well as receivers. He was aware that a Gospel that had the world for its

field, all nations as its range of operation, and every creature as the object of its concern needed the voices as well as the ears of its nonprofessional adherents. Preaching ought to leave the listener with the challenge given to a man whom the Lord healed: "Go home to thy friends, and tell them how great things the Lord has done for thee."

Finally, I am used to the idea that the Bible is the chief source and sanction of preaching. If the heart of the preacher's message steps beyond or beneath the Bible, he is out of bounds and in violation. Penalty flags drop from heaven and earth; forward progress is impeded, and the goals of God are missed.

As an incentive for making use of the Bible, the Christian minister should keep in mind that there yet remains among the laity more hospitality for the pronouncements and affirmations of the Scriptures than for any other document. The average person in the pew would be the first to vote down any resolution to replace the Bible with some other book; he prefers the textbook to be the Bible. It is, indeed, for them the Book of Life.

Inspiration for the preacher's use of the ancient testator can be furnished by the realization that the Bible contains the original settings and elucidations of those great ideas and grand themes we are called upon to treat. It is home base for those moral and spiritual presuppositions, assumptions, and convictions posited in the Judaeo-Christian system. It is the cradle of our Christian conceptualization. It should be given priority because it has primacy.

Making a strong bid, also, for its use is the fact that the Bible is a deterrent against dealing in irrelevancies and immediacies. Among the earlier works of the late Dr. Jesse J. McNeil was a paperback edition entitled, *Things That Matter Now*. A chapter on the Bible was included in this publication which indicated the author's awareness of the Bible's appropriateness for our age. No man need fear that what he delivers is divorced from life if it is underpinned and overarched with the views and verdicts of the written Word.

PREACHING PERSPECTIVES

Dr. John Burke, O.P.

I have been asked to describe methods and programs aimed at homiletical improvement—techniques that we are currently using at the Word of God Institute and other institutions to enrich the quality of preaching. I will be speaking, of course, about what I understand is happening in the Roman Catholic tradition. I would like to do this by telling you the story of the National Congress, which was held in Washington, to improve the quality of preaching. Why it came to be held is the heart of the story. The Word of God Institute developed out of this Congress, and the story illustrates graphically a number of the problems that we faced.

When I taught at Catholic University in the speech and drama department—this is where the story begins—I also taught preaching to the Dominicans in our seminary. I taught such courses as public speaking and oral reading. A number of my colleagues in the speech and drama department also taught these seminarians. We were basically theater people who backed into preaching mainly through teaching methodology courses, but what we all soon experienced was an almost total lack of interest in such courses. Our students simply were not learning—nor did they care that they were not learning. We instructors worked hard at giving them exercises designed to help them improve their homiletical skills—all to no avail. Their reactions were that they just did not feel that preaching well was all that important. Although we spent much time trying to interest them in these courses, some of them would not even buy the books. It was a bizarre experience.

I began by asking why this was true. I discovered first that these seminarians, with few exceptions, had never heard a sermon that changed their lives. Preaching, therefore, made no difference to them. They received most of their experiences of God and Jesus and growth in faith somewhere else. They

Dr. Burke is Executive Director of the Word of God Institute, Washington, D.C. A Dominican priest who until recently taught at Catholic University, he organized last year's National Congress on the Word of God. Its purpose was to emphasize Biblical theology in preaching. Dr. Burke holds the Master of Arts and Doctor of Sacred Theology degrees from the Catholic University, Washington, D.C.

thought, "Well, preaching has never made any difference in my life, how can my preaching make a difference in anybody else's life?" They had no trust, no faith in the act of preaching itself, and they seemed totally uninterested in acquiring any homiletical skills.

To counter this feeling, I began to change the program a little. For one thing, I became interested in the theology of preaching. I realized that we had to ask the question, What does revelation have to say about preaching? Is it in fact important? During this time I also realized that I had never heard a sermon that changed *my* life. Just as important, *I* was not preaching sermons that would change my life or anyone else's. In fact, I really was no more interested in what I was saying than my parishioners were.

The second thing I discovered was that I was dealing with very bright seminarians who, nevertheless, gave the most banal sermons. One fellow, for example, gave a lecture on the difference between transubstantiation and transignification. It was a brilliant sermon; I couldn't understand a word of it. It was all technical, theological jargon, but it was impressive. After he finished, his classmate got up and stated that he appreciated his friend's sermon, but he wanted to deal with something more practical, namely, why should we go to Mass on Sunday when it is inevitably a dull experience? Since he didn't have any answers, he did the best he could by asking the other seminarians to enter into a dialogue on the subject. Nobody had any answers. They knew a great deal intellectually, but they simply didn't believe very much. It was that simple. There was no relationship between their understanding and their belief.

Evidently this is true all over the Church, because we have a crisis of faith. You probably know the statistics as well as I do. In 1963, for example, 78% of those who identified themselves as Catholics went to Church on Sunday—no matter how poorly they lived during the week. The latest survey, however, indicates that only 47% go to Church on Sunday, with a drop of 5% in the last year alone. That drop is taking place among the old as well as the young. Continuing Christian Development (CCD) programs are not really programs in most Catholic Churches any more—they are disaster areas. The loyal few that finally do come tend to drop out—at a rate of 50% to 75% from September to May. But there is one figure that is the most indicative of the seriousness of the crisis of faith which we are all as Christians experiencing. It is this: there are some 48 million Catholics in the United States today, 55,000 priests, 150,000 sisters, 22,000 seminarians, 6,000 to 8,000 brothers—a vast spiritual army sup-

posedly filled with Jesus and realizing both the preciousness of their gift and the divine mandate of the Lord, "Go and proclaim the Gospel to all creation." This vast army of 48 million people managed to convert this past year just 73,000 people. And most of those weren't conversions from paganism, from the darkness of sin and ignorance to the light of the Lord Jesus. Most of those were transdenominational transfers by reason of marriage. Not very many were pagans immersed in sin, pagans who were suddenly raised to life in Jesus Christ by the activity of the Catholic Church.

These insights, together with our experience of revelation, told us that people will not believe unless they have a *preacher*. What begets faith is the Word of Christ which comes from the Scriptures. A major thrust of the Catholic Church at the present time, therefore, is the revitalization of Scriptural studies. Unfortunately we still have this crisis of faith, and we are still turning out seminarians who are totally uninterested in preaching.

We decided that the answer to this devastating problem was to have a national event of such significance that it would focus the entire attention of the Church on the need for biblical preaching. We would have a National Congress celebrated in the National Shrine of Immaculate Conception and invite the bishops, priests and faithful from all over the country to come to celebrate the power of God's Word to bring salvation. We would get the finest Catholic preachers and bring them all together. We went to the president of the Catholic University of America and asked him if the University would sponsor this event. We explained to him that there have been many congresses in the long history of the Church—liturgical congresses, Marian congresses, and Eucharistic congresses, but as far as we knew there had never been a congress to celebrate the power of God's Word. The University thought this would be a great idea; it gave us its blessing. The Lord, however, provided the money. One of our problems was to find the five greatest Catholic speakers in America today. Everybody suggested Archbishop Fulton J. Sheen as number one, but no one could suggest who was number two. Preaching was so bad there really was no number two. Our board of advisors finally selected several very good speakers: Fathers Barnabas Ahern, Eugene Maly, two great Scripture scholars, and Cardinal Timothy Manning and Archbishop John R. Quinn.

The Congress was a great success. In attendance were 24 bishops, a thousand priests and several thousand lay people. Discussions related preaching to communications, to religious education and to liturgy. Scriptural studies and all kinds of concurrent

conferences were held in which experts met. It was successful in that it struck a responsive chord in people's hearts. This, they said, is what the Church *needs*. When we saw this response, we also saw the need to channel these creative energies that the Holy Spirit was pouring forth upon us into significant action in the Church. We therefore decided to form the Word of God Institute. On the last day of the National Congress, Bishop Gallagher, from Lafayette, Indiana, offered to assist in setting up a committee of bishops to work with the Institute. He was really the answer to prayer in that he recruited six bishops for our National Advisory Board. What is important is that they saw the Word of God Institute as a catalyst to bring about the revitalization of biblical preaching in the Roman Catholic tradition. We strive to get others to refocus on the need for biblical preaching.

If there is to be any renewal in the Church, it will have to come through the renewal of faith. But faith comes from hearing the Word of God. Much of that hearing will be from preachers who will create a ground swell of hunger among the people for the Word of God. Bible study groups are being established so that the feeding is not all from the top down. It is also from the ground up. This is one of the emphases of the Word of God Institute.

We also work with Catholic bishops. We recently submitted a seminary curriculum revision proposal to the National Conference of Catholic Bishops which called for greater emphasis on preaching.

In addition, we produced a manifesto on evangelization. In 1973 the Bishops' Synod in Rome chose as its topic, "Evangelization of the World." It was something of a Catholic Key '73 in which we provided input to the National Conference of Catholic Bishops.

The manifesto on evangelization is very exciting in its attempt to present a totally biblical point of view. Fourteen theologians and Scripture scholars worked on it. A lot of Catholics, however, are very much afraid of the Bible. Even priests will say that one must be very careful about the Bible, how one interprets it to Bible students. It's a tragic idea that infiltrates the Church that somehow the Lord's Bible is going to lead us all astray. It's something that no doubt presents problems. But we have been given the Holy Spirit to provide for those problems.

We also conduct workshops for retreats of priests on the theme, "The Father of Faith." We have also initiated a new section in "The Bible Today" in which we will have three articles per issue on biblical preaching. One will be a general article,

one will be for preachers, and one for Bible study groups on different key biblical themes.

Why is preaching so poor? It is because we do not believe in our ministry. The preacher's greatest act of faith is his understanding that what he is doing makes a difference, that the Lord acts through him. This act of faith is demonstrated when he studies the Bible, when he gets up in front of all of those blank faces and is faithful to his mission, when he *proclaims* the Word as he has *experienced* it in his own life. When he does this, the world changes in that the Kingdom of God has been extended. The greatest cause for a priest leaving the ministry today is that he has lost his sense of mission, his scene of vocation, the sense that the finger of God has touched him no matter what the circumstances, no matter what the persecutions—that he has to endure, that he is still God's man, that he speaks in God's name, that he does God's work and that God is his support. He is not ashamed of the Gospel of God and his power. The crisis of faith, therefore, exists in the *preacher.* If *he* doesn't believe in his work, he will be unable to order the priorities of his life properly. He will flee from preaching because he doesn't trust it. He doesn't believe that he can do it even though he has been called by Almighty God and therefore empowered to do it. He therefore distracts himself from it; he does other things and he keeps busy, but he doesn't enter into the world of the Bible.

Most Catholic priests can't even read the Bible in Greek. *I* can't read it in Greek. Imagine the seminary system which begets preachers of the Word who can't read it in Greek. But I learned theology in Latin. In fact, I never had a course in theology in English. To this day I can't read Saint Thomas in English because everybody knows you can't understand St. Thomas except in Latin. We spend half our time trying to find a translation of the Bible and usually we end up with paraphrases. But today seminarians are not interested in learning Greek. They won't even discuss Hebrew. So what *are* the priorities of study? The latest seminary program that has come out of Catholic University in the ministries that priests can go into is the D. Min. program, a pastoral ministry program. There are nine ministries, the fifth and sixth of which are preaching and liturgy. What are the rest? Social action, counseling, psychology, alcoholism—it's all kinds but the Word is lost—buried in the middle. How many priests today spend an hour a day immersed in the Bible? It's just not done; it's not a tradition.

Dr. Edward Bauman, as you know, has an excellent program on the Bible. He's the pastor of Foundry Methodist Church whom I have known for many years. We have had a number of

11

workshops together. Dr. Bauman taught preaching in a theological seminary until he was called to the pastorate. He was soon immersed in pastoral routine. It occurred to him as he got up one Sunday practically unprepared that he had not been spending much time preparing his sermons or studying the Bible. He took the following counsel of himself: either I believe that the Word of God is the most important thing in my ministry or I don't. It's either primary or it isn't. If it's primary, then it must receive more time. Not just any time, but *first* time. So he told the secretary that he was unavailable from 8 to 12 every morning because he would spend that time preparing his sermon and studying the Bible. It was simply a matter of placing first things first. I think that's the practical thing that has to be done if you want to improve the preaching of your chaplains. There is only one way to do it. Make it first!

I don't want to get into how long it takes to write a sermon. It takes me 25 hours, but maybe I am a slow thinker. How a person can do it in two or three hours is incredible! He can't! But this lack of preparation explains why most of the sermons I've heard in my life were banal. I wouldn't mind if they were polished rhetoric, but empty—at least I would delight in the words. I don't even hear good rhetoric, it's just banal—insulting to a person's intelligence. Once I heard the dean of a graduate school give a talk on the state of higher education. A number of priests were in the audience, and at the time I thought that I would hate to have been his pastor. His thoughts showed great comprehension, especially when I compared them to what I ordinarily heard from the pulpit.

We also need a theology of preaching. You cannot preach unless you know what you are doing. Preaching is the oral communication which begets and nourishes faith through Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. It is correlative to *faith*. It is not the act of explaining and resolving difficulties in the political or sociological situation. It is begetting children of God through faith in Jesus Christ. When you clearly understand that about preaching, then everything else in your program will begin to be ordered around that great concept. You will not be interested in character education first of all. You will first of all be interested in nourishing faith in Jesus Christ.

That leads me to a third point. One of the great causes of poor preaching is the fact that the preacher himself does not believe. He does not have the experience of faith. He is not a transformed man, one who is reborn in Jesus. In other words, preaching doesn't make a big difference in him. And if it *does* make a difference to him, you know it.

I heard some welfare mothers on television not long ago. These were ignorant women in the sense that their grammar was bad and their ideas were pretty unsophisticated. But you knew what they wanted and you were moved by their pain, because they were talking out of a need to communicate what they were experiencing. Their words may not have been good rhetoric, but they were eloquent because their pain was real. They experienced it.

The preacher should be like the poet who writes those beautiful, highly structured sonnets. That poet has had an experience of life that goes beyond the ordinary. It is intense; it is incisive. By writing a play or by painting a picture, the artist ushers us into a new world which casts new meaning on our own world of everyday life. So it is with the preacher. His is the world of Jesus Christ and his Kingdom. So intense is his experience of that person and kingdom that he wants everyone else to experience and share in the great joy which is his. If you don't have a turned-on preacher, you will have turned-off audiences.

I've conducted worships for a number of different ecumenical groups, including groups of chaplains. It is clear that tradition influences the way we preach the Bible. (I don't mean a book. The Bible is not a book. That is perhaps the greatest misunderstanding there could be about what the Bible really is. The Bible is what is written in our hearts by the Holy Spirit. That's the Bible, the living faith. If all of us Christians were to die and a hundred years later somebody came along and found the King James Bible and the Jerusalem Bible and they opened them up and studied them, they still would not have the Bible. The Bible only lives in the heart of the believer by the preaching of the Church and the action and enlivening of the Holy Spirit. The Bible isn't theological concepts and the traditions I have heard in sermons.) For example, in their sermons Catholic priests usually get very abstract. They deal with theological terminology which is quite removed from their people, since priests all too often answer questions people never ask. They attempt to explain the mystery, and their people are only asking, Does God really love *me*? On the other hand, Protestant traditions avoid preaching the Bible by becoming anecdotal. Protestant ministers are great for telling little stories about "what Jesus did for me" or "how the Holy Spirit came upon me in the study the other day." Both traditions avoid the Bible. What I am suggesting is that both traditions have to enter into the Bible. When they do so, they will both be surprised by how much they have in common. One has to trust what the Bible does; it fulfills the injunction of the Lord that we must be one. The

reason that people are turned away from Christianity is because they don't see Jesus. They know that Jesus is one and we are not.

Let's look now at some requirements for conducting continuing education programs in homiletics. Briefly, the first requirement is a firm biblical basis, a theological basis. We need a theology of preaching and it has to be an ecumenical theology of preaching. What can be done about preaching that is failing and the Church which is dying? Whatever is done must begin on a solid theological basis. This is essential. Otherwise we will not be able to counteract what we are all experiencing, namely, a crisis of faith.

The second requirement is a trained faculty. You need men who are experienced and skilled in the theology of preaching, communication, liturgy and all the other essential subjects.

The third requirement is that you maintain your focus on preaching as the total response of man. Otherwise you will get caught up in methodology; you will end up with more "how to" courses. The one thing that will not solve the problem of today is another "how to" course. Having taught many of them, I can assure you that this is not the answer.

The fourth and final requirement is an analysis of how chaplains feel about preaching. Where are they? What do they think? How do they feel and what do they experience? In addition, ask lay persons how much of their spiritual development has been influenced by preaching. These are the minimal requirements for a continuing education program in homiletics. They presuppose that the minister and the priest be Spirit-filled persons who are in touch with Jesus Christ.

COMMUNICATING THE GOSPEL

Clyde E. Fant, Th.D.

The communication of the Gospel is a theological problem. Ultimately it is the presence of the Word within the Gospel that makes communication possible. But because it is truly a theological problem, the communication of the Gospel has a human as well as a divine dimension. People are also present in the Gospel. When the Good News was first framed, it was a message to people through people. The Word had to become flesh and dwell among us before we could behold its glory.

This means that preaching is confronted with two realities, the living Word and the living situation. To communicate the Gospel, the preacher must be intimately involved with both. Any separation on the part of the preacher from either of these situations prevents the communication of the Gospel. Preaching which is separated from the living Word is ultimately meaningless speech; preaching which is separated from the living situation is unintelligible speech.

For some preachers, the necessity of subjective involvement in the act of proclamation is viewed as a liability, a handicap in the task of preaching. For others, the objectivity of the historical revelation, the particularity of the Word becoming flesh in the person of Jesus and in the history of Israel, is regarded as an ongoing hindrance to contemporary communication. Both of these stances are false.

In the first place, without my personal, subjective involvement with my congregation, with this time and place, I could not communicate at all. Preaching would be more futile than an Eskimo attempting to describe a walrus to a Bedouin when neither spoke the language of the other. Of course my subjective participation in culture and my interpretation of the Bible presents risks and dangers; but nevertheless, the subjectivity of my contemporary existence is a permit for preaching, not a prohibition of it.

Dr. Fant is Professor of Preaching at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Fort Worth, Texas. He is the co-author of *Twenty Centuries of Great Preaching; An Encyclopedia of Preaching* (13 vols.) and is also the co-editor of *Contemporary Christian Trends.* His newest work, *Some Said It Thundered,* will be published this year.

Likewise, the preacher who feels himself limited by the historical given of revelation does not understand the facts of the case. It is because God particularized himself in Israel and in Jesus of Nazareth that we may have confidence in addressing the particular situation here and now. The God we proclaim is not embarrassed to be involved in history; he is not too impersonal to enter into the experiences of common life. And if I did not know that God is present in his Word quite apart from my ability to prove him there, as a preacher I should be of all men most miserable. Then the communication of the Gospel would be entirely a matter of my own persuasive abilities in the pulpit.

For this reason, theology has never been entirely comfortable with communication theory. For example, Eberhard Bethge says that Dietrich Bonhoeffer never asked, "How can we better communicate to modern man the message we possess? That question would turn the interpreter into a salesman to the have-nots." [1] This suspicion of any studied approach to the oral communication of the Gospel is widespread in theology. Ronald E. Sleeth has listed six criticisms of theology at this point: 1) theology has expressed its disapproval of the application of communication theories to preaching by ignoring them; 2) this indifference is actually based upon the fear that the study of oral communication elevates the human and minimizes the divine; 3) theology regards the task of communication as a theological one, and it sees communication theory as affirming that right techniques rightly learned are sufficient for communicating the message of the Gospel; 4) theology is suspicious of communication because of its apparent instrumental or pragmatic use of the religious message; 5) theologians are afraid of the study of communication because of their fear of manipulation; 6) theology is concerned about the humanistic implications of some speech theories because of their preoccupation with the behavioral and social sciences. [2]

These warnings are not to be ignored. We can readily agree with Paul Tillich when he says, "The question cannot be: How do we communicate the Gospel so that others will accept it? For this there is no method. To communicate the Gospel means putting it before the people so that they are able to decide for or against it. . . . All that we who communicate this Gospel can do is make possible the genuine decision." [3]

---

[1] Eberhard Bethge, "Bonhoeffer's Christology and his 'Religionless Christianity'," in *Bonhoeffer in a World Come of Age*, ed. Peter Vorkink (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1968) p. 50.

[2] Ronald E. Sleeth, "Theology versus Communication Theories," *Religion and Life*, 32 (Autumn, 1963) pp. 537–542.

[3] Paul Tillich, *Theology of Culture*, ed. Robert C. Kimball (New York: Oxford University Press, 1959) p. 201.

But must we not also agree with Tillich when he says that there are two kinds of "stumbling blocks" in Christianity: "One is genuine. . . . There is always a genuine decision against the Gospel for those for whom it is a stumbling block. But this decision should not be dependent upon the wrong stumbling block, namely, the wrong way of our communication of the Gospel—our inability to communicate." And he asks, "Will the Christian churches be able to remove the wrong stumbling blocks in their attempt to communicate the Gospel?" [4]

In other words, Tillich is saying that communication should not be equated with persuasion. Even if a man says *no*, the Gospel has still been communicated—*if* it is the Gospel he is rejecting and not merely our presentation of it. But it has not been communicated if he never gets to the Gospel at all because he has stumbled over my presentation of it.

This has important implications for our understanding of the communication of the Gospel. The human factor in the preaching equation cannot be ignored. If our methods of communication can frustrate the proclamation of the Word and set a false stumbling block in the paths of men so that they are never able to hear the Gospel at all, then our presentation of the message requires the most careful attention.

Obviously it would be impossible at this point to survey oral communication theory and its implications for preaching. But perhaps we might examine several principles which may help the preacher to avoid those remote dialects of pulpit speech that block the communication of the Gospel.

Isolation breeds dialect. The more isolated the region, the more obscure the dialect. When the pulpit becomes isolated, it also produces its own peculiar dialects. The isolation of the pulpit is not primarily due to geographical separation, although occasionally that plays some role. More important, however, is the separation caused either by the attitude of the preacher or his methodology. These are the two causes for the isolation of the pulpit, and each has produced its own dialect.

The first source of pulpit dialect is attitudinal separation, an isolation chosen by the provincial preacher. It is not geography that makes a preacher provincial, but an attitude of remoteness to either the world or the Word. It is equally as provincial to ignore the significance of the Word as to ignore the significance of the world. This means that the most sophisticated preacher may be just as provincial, and therefore as dialect-separated, as the most geographically isolated preacher.

---

[4] *Ibid.*, p. 213.

17

Faulty methodology can also cause dialect. The preacher may struggle helplessly to escape the non-speech of pulpit dialect but cannot simply because he does not know what it is in his language or method that is isolating him. In this case an unintelligible dialect is produced because of faulty technique in preaching.

Thus the pulpit has produced two distinct dialects: Upper Garble and Lower Garble. Upper Garble is that dialect produced by attitudinal separation; Lower Garble results from faulty technique. Of course neither of these dialects is entirely independent of either attitude or technique, but the two are at least sufficiently distinct as to be described. Perhaps it would be helpful to state the principles of the two varieties of pulpit dialect, Upper Garble and Lower Garble.

Upper Garble

1. *Never uses a short word when a long one would be more impressive.* Impressiveness is the key to Upper Garble. When the preacher does not feel sufficiently impressive, Upper Garble can compensate for his insecurity. Short words can be understood by anyone, but lengthy words are more complex and therefore more suggestive of the mysterious, the profound, the more-than-human.

With careful practice, the user of Upper Garble can systematically replace every short word in his vocabulary with a longer one which will be more difficult to understand. Even the simplest expressions can be rendered unintelligible: "That prudent aves which matutinally deserts the coziness of its abode will ensnare a vermiform creature." (The early bird catches the worm).

With a little luck, the Upper Garbler may get so obscure that no one will confuse him with a human being. In fact, this is precisely his problem: "Persistently obscure writers will usually be found to be defective human beings." [5]

2. *Always uses theo-philosophic language.* The professional training of any specialist is a process of encoding; that is, an input into his mind of technical terms useful to his specialty. There is nothing basically wrong with that. The problems develop when an encoded specialist tries to communicate without decoding his information. Then people who have never been encoded are bewildered, even if somewhat impressed.

The preacher, who is trained by theologians and similarly encoded, may be tempted to show the lofty region of his training by his dialect. He wants to prove to a world of secular godlings—

---

[5] Brand Blanshard, *On Philosophical Style* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1954) pp. 52–53.

doctors, scientific types, even insurance underwriters—that he is *too* a specialist. So he pulls out all the stops. He uses every obscure theological term he knows and quotes those few Greek and Hebrew phrases he still remembers.

By doing so, he gets the best of both worlds: his credibility is high as a fully accredited specialist whose long years of training are obviously in evidence; and his knowledge of the mysterious God he purports to represent is safely cloaked under a cloud of obscurity.

The Upper Garbler invariably confuses obscurity with profundity. Jesus was profound, never obscure. He had profound thoughts and simple language. We are just the opposite: we have profound language and simple thoughts. But one hides the other.

3. *Strives for elevated or inflated language.* Inflated language is simply another means of sounding impressive. Through a careful use of adjectives, the most ordinary event can be turned into a spectacle. That is particularly useful for the preacher who does not want his parishioners to mistake the noble realm of the religious world with everyday life.

For example, everything must become "marvelous," "wonderful," "glorious." By connecting his ministerial air hose, the preacher of Upper Garble can inflate the simplest words into great bloated things to be released over the heads of a gaping congregation. If the choir sang well, it was "glorious." If the last meeting of the deacons or elders concluded without a fight, it was "wonderful." (That may not be overly inflated!)

Unfortunately, however, such inflated language, like inflated currency, eventually becomes worthless. Nobody wants it; it is even hard to give away.

4. *Prizes involved reasoning.* There are times, even for the most accomplished practitioner of Upper Garble, when the most naive parishioners begin to see through his language. Then it is necessary to lose them in the dark woods of complex reasoning. If they cannot follow the tracks of inference and deduction, no matter how carefully they trace the intricate patterns, then the mystery is safe and the authority of the Upper Garbler is secure. Plainness is one virtue that Upper Garble shuns like the plague. Nothing is more humiliating than being understood.

How long, of course, these people will continue to follow the hounds at the Sunday hunt is open to question. From the persistently declining attendance at worship, it is apparent that many people have enjoyed all the sport they can stand.

5. *Loses its humanity in its divinity.* Upper Garble is guilty of homiletical Docetism. The preacher who practices it imagines

that his humanity is an illusion. Therefore he overstates when confused. No one could be expected to be right all the time, but superiority is difficult to maintain in the presence of error. It smacks too much of humanity. Therefore the preacher must appear to know everything. A bit of verse expresses it well: "When in danger or in doubt, run in circles, scream and shout."

This is no minor problem, no insignificant misuse of elocution, no matter how comical are certain aspects of it. Upper Garble is a serious symptom of a deeply underlying problem, an indicator of an acute spiritual sickness. It is the outward expression of an inward disorder which can only lead to an abnormal existence for both preacher and congregation.

Lower Garble

The most authentic preacher can still have great difficulty in proclaiming the Gospel. If he does, he may unconsciously suffer from one or more errors in sermon presentation which have resulted in Lower Garble, the second dialect of the pulpit.

1. *Locates the sermon in ancient history.* Background studies and historical information are essential to the correct interpretation of the biblical text. But this historical data itself cannot become the exclusive focus of the sermon. The preacher must never be preoccupied with ancient grammar, historical footnoting, and background studies. Otherwise he will become lost in Canaan and never find his way into the twentieth century at all. It is good to visit Canaan, but too many preachers enter the pulpit carrying waterpots on their heads.

If the sermon is not to wander around longer in the historical wilderness than the Israelites trying to find the Promised Land, the cure for this malady is not to reduce the sermon to the six o'clock news report. Fosdick's remark about the Jebusites is well known, but his balance to that statement is not equally familiar: "If people do not come to church anxious about what happened to the Jebusites, neither do they come yearning to hear a lecturer express his personal opinion on themes which editors, columnists, and radio commentators have been dealing with throughout the week." [6]

2. *Speaks to no one in particular about nothing in particular.* The motto of this kind of preaching is, "I shot a sermon in the air, it fell to earth, I know not where." The title of many sermons could be, "Some Good Things to Do," or, "And Another Thing . . . !" Lower Garble suffers from an incurable vagueness. Every sermon is a hopeless collection of religious generalizations.

---

[6] Harry Emerson Fosdick, *The Living of These Days* (New York: Harper and Bros., 1956) p. 93.

This kind of preaching is usually caused by a limited notion of the Gospel. The preacher of Lower Garble really has only one sermon, which his prior insights have strongly impressed upon him. He may be dimly aware of this limitation and may even struggle feebly against it for awhile, but eventually he gives up and resorts to a mere shuffling of illustrations, titles and texts to provide a spurious variety in his preaching.

Unless the preacher keeps both the biblical and contemporary in sharp focus, he will aimlessly cross the same dull terrain, having neither a specific message nor a specific party to deliver it to. He must pay more attention to what the Bible and the people are trying to tell him. In short, he needs to listen more and talk less.

3. *Lacks vividness because it never becomes involved.* Lower Garble is always talking about "it," never about "you" and "me." This is not a question of application, but of focus. Perhaps the preacher has become infatuated with ideas and is guilty of theme worship. It is as though the preacher turned away from his audience to address his subject. If the audience likes, it may look at the subject with him. But only he and his subject are in dialogue; the people are passive spectators. The congregation is deceived into believing that the worship hour is a time for the passive observation of an oratorical performance which takes place external to them, and largely external to the preacher. At best it is briefly entertaining, at worst, deadly dull. But whatever it is, the sermon is never a vital, living encounter between God and his people.

4. *Lacks imagination totally.* It is marked by obvious words, ordinary ideas, and predictable order. Lower Garble is "ho-hum" preaching. It may avoid the rococo speech of Upper Garble with its endless flourishes and fretwork, but its own blockhouse style is scarcely an improvement.

To begin with, its words are obvious. A word does not need to be long, or technical, or inflated to avoid the obvious. It can be fresh, vivid, angular, tactile. With thought, the simplest words can spark. In fact, as overblown as American pulpit speech has become, any simple word is usually exciting. Furthermore, the ideas of Lower Garble are ordinary. Not ordinary as in "understandable," but ordinary as in "trite." In fact, they are usually nothing but a string of religious clichés. Finally, the order of Lower Garble sermons is always predictable. The traditional preacher is predictably rigid, the *avant garde* preacher predictably amorphous. The evangelistic preacher is predictably authoritarian, the counseling preacher predictably nondirective. It becomes

obvious that the form of the sermon is not in the least influenced by the Scripture, but entirely by the life style and theological bias of the preacher.

The only cure for the predictable sameness of Lower Garble is for the preacher to take seriously both the real Word and the real world. And that will inevitably lead him to freshness and discovery.

The pulpit must overcome the dialect separation of Upper Garble and Lower Garble to be heard. No doubt it can go on being a vaguely amusing and somehow comforting anachronism, a quaint remembrance of the good old days of virtue and innocence, of Sunday bandstands in the park and Fourth of July rhetoric, an occasionally pleasant pastoral interlude far from the "real world." But if it does so, it can only expect amused tourists, not committed disciples.

The church must break down the dialect walls which block its speech from reaching the world, those communication barriers which wall itself in and others out. What was true of Paul is true of us: "And when they realized that he spoke their own language, they listened the more willingly." (Acts 22:2)

WHAT SHOULD WE TEACH THE PREACHER?

J. Randall Nichols, Ph.D.

Sooner or later many (if not most) preachers wake up to the uncomfortable realization that what they deeply want to accomplish with preaching, and the way they have been taught to accomplish it, are headed off in different directions. For the conscientious preacher it is an agonizing experience made up of too many answerless questions: What do I really have to say? How can I get it said? What good does it do to say it? Who am *I* to be saying it, anyway? Is anyone out there hearing anything?

The preacher who comes through that crisis point in his ministry with fresh insight into himself, his ministry and his communication of the Gospel has discovered—the hard way— most of what I want to suggest in this discussion of ways to improve preaching effectiveness. When the time is ripe, a preacher who is sensitive both to his people's needs and to his own theological commitments will want to know some things we have not told him before. The answers to his questions can serve as a format for thinking about continuing education for preachers. In the paragraphs which follow I want to talk about certain key areas which I believe have been neglected in what you could call "Preacher Effectiveness Training," and then in an appendix to suggest that congregations may be more willing than we realize to value and share the ministry of preaching.

I

We need to teach our preachers what their communication work does in fact accomplish at several levels (rather than what it does not or cannot accomplish, the familiar litany of homiletical failure) particularly in terms of creating a group's identity, confirming people's internal systems of belief and value, and helping people cope with their life problems. The question we need to answer is: What does communication *do*, conceptually, emotionally and relationally?

Dr. Nichols is Pastor of the Oak Hills Presbyterian Church of San Antonio, Texas. He has also served as Instructor in Homiletics at Princeton Theological Seminary, where he was awarded a Ph.D., *magna cum laude*, in 1970, and as Visiting Professor of Homiletics at Austin Theological Seminary.

A sermon that is dull, structured to death with points and sub-points, and heavy with theological jargon may not free people to respond joyfully to following Jesus Christ as the preacher hoped; but that is not the same as saying it was ineffective or did not do anything. More likely it was exceedingly effective in confirming the expectation that religion is a deadly business in which what you say and what you feel never get within hailing distance of each other!

It is naive indeed to assume that a group of people who more or less consistently expose themselves to the same kinds of messages from the same person over a long period of time are not going to be affected in some important ways by that communication experience. Our question must be: *How* are they affected? A preacher who does not know how is in the awkward position of not being able to tell whether he is effective or not. On what standards? With respect to what objectives?

I used to be rather unpopular in my homiletics classes for insisting that each student preacher be able to state an objective for his sermon and that it *not* be an ideological statement of his main point or "proposition." What did he want to see happen as the outcome of the sermon in terms of the congregation's feelings or behavior or attitudes or values or experience? If he could not tell me, why should I listen to him? Objective-setting for sermons (particularly in light of congregational needs and issues) is an underdeveloped skill among most preachers.

II

Closely related to the foregoing, we need to teach preachers to analyze their sermons for what I will call "second level" message features, that is, other-than-semantic characteristics of messages which shape and build audience expectations, values, beliefs, coping devices and relationships. To put it another way: we need to help preachers get comfortable in discovering the nonrhetorical factors in communication experience.

For example, intriguing research has been done on the idea of "immediacy" as a channel of communication—a "second level" message feature. "Immediacy" refers to the whole constellation of verbal and non-verbal cues which give messages the quality of being personal, direct, important—in a word, "immediate" to the hearer's own investments. That much is probably familiar.

What may come as news, however, is the research finding that messages analyzed as being low in immediacy, no matter how positive they sound, invariably communicate negative affect, and low evaluation or non-preference for either the object of the

message *or the addressee.*[1] A good natured preacher who just happens to be dull and distant in the pulpit is not merely "ineffective"; quite the contrary, he is sending what will be received as a decisively negative message and possibly an extremely "effective" one in that way!

Granted, "second-level" message features are hard to get hold of conceptually. The subtleties òf how a preacher uses language, of the consistent themes or hidden agendas of his sermons, of the assumptions he makes about what he is saying, and of the expressive style he uses in preaching—all are both terribly influential over the long run, but also terribly elusive. That is all the more reason, I believe, for teaching preachers to tune in to the second level of their sermons.

III

Our training of preachers as well as our understanding of the communication process would be vastly easier if we could learn some of the central dynamics of how people hear and understand, and how the process of their creative insight, discovery, and problem-solving works under the influence of messages. We need to teach our preachers to understand and trust the mechanisms of perception, understanding and creative growth in hearers.

I would argue in particular that the role of intra-psychic conflict is central in the dynamic of communication, and that we need to help preachers understand it better. A good case has been made that we learn and grow in response to felt conflict. Researchers in the field of creative behavior suggest that our flashes of insight and personal appropriation come after a struggle with conflict—in perception, cognition, feeling or even social relationships.[2]

To take a biblical example, the distraught disciples returning to Emmaus after the crucifixion did not recognize Jesus until their conflict reached a certain intensity—"We had hoped he was the one to redeem Israel, *but* he is dead."[3] At the pitch of conflict between trust and betrayal, a symbolic "click" occurs and, as Luke says, "Their eyes were opened and they recognized him." Later—only later—would they interpret their immediate experience using the abstract theological language of "resurrection."

---

[1] Morton Wiener and Albert Mehrabian, *Language Within Language: Immediacy, A Channel In Verbal Communication* (New York, 1968).

[2] See J. Randall Nichols, *Conflict and Creativity: The Dynamics of the Communication Process In Theological Perspective,* Ph.D. dissertation, Princeton Theological Seminary, 1970.

[3] Luke 24:21.

Now if the objective of a sermon—say, "on resurrection"—is to enable hearers to feel the same liberating experience of recognizing Jesus' presence in their lives, then the preacher needs to know how such an experience of recognition happens in a person's consciousness. If I am right about the conflict dynamic, one important difference such an understanding makes is that if you want to preach "on resurrection" you do not start by laboring over the theological concept, but rather with some simulation of the experience of trust/betrayal conflict at the bedrock of a person's life. Then you trust his own creative participation in that conflict to produce the raw data of communication experience: some image of personal resolution and understanding which *for that person* is the "meaning of the message." "Resurrection" is a convenient linguistic way of articulating and interpreting what was first and foremost for the listener an experience of perception and understanding.

<div align="center">IV</div>

Despite my insistence on the importance of "second-level" factors in communication work, we are never far from actual language. We need to teach our preachers both the opportunities and limitations of their theological language, and its peculiar communicative role.

The preacher needs to know how to struggle with the question of how religious language—the language of his preaching—influences, grows out of, and serves to interpret his people's actual religious experience. The preacher more than other communicators needs to learn how both in the Bible and in the religious community its peculiar language and imagery does not *point toward* religious experience (still less "divine reality") so much as it *leads into* it.[4]

I would particularly like to see preachers have an understanding of three factors in religious experience and the language which leads into it: intensity, ambiguity and self-involvement. The hypothesis would be that what we call religious experience differs from ordinary experience by being exceptionally *intense*, with respect to normal levels of stimulation and novelty; exceptionally *ambiguous*, with respect to what a person expects in perception and tolerates in complexity; and exceptionally *self-involving*, with respect to the usual psychological distance a person maintains between himself and the world around him. If that is what a preacher wants to cultivate in the communication experience he is guiding, then he needs to understand how

---

[4] See Daniel Batson, *et al.*, *Commitment Without Ideology: The Experience of Christian Growth* (Philadelphia, 1973) for fuller discussion.

language works for or against such factors. Presumably he will not guide an intense, ambiguous and self-involving experience with language which is tame, familiar and remote!

<center>V</center>

The last suggestion I have in this format for preacher education is in a way a summation of everything that has already been said. We come finally to the working question: How do I construct a sermon that is suited to the theological objectives I have, knowing what I do about what is going on in preaching?

The answer I would like us to teach our preachers is: Learn how to tell a story. Learn *functionally* what a story is and does (irrespective of any literary form), how it accomplishes communication work, and how it can work in the highly structured format of preaching.

In homiletics we have made some serious mistakes about stories, by referring to them rather than telling them, by implying that stories are somehow "less real" than descriptions of events or even than theological formulations, or by cursing our story-telling with interpretation. Freud said that dreams were the "royal road to the unconscious." Some modern psychotherapists have discovered that story-telling is another such avenue into the hidden domain of what makes us what we are.[5] I would urge the preacher to consider the story a royal road into religious experience—both the Bible's and our own—perhaps the most direct route we have to the mystery and depth of religious response.

The story invites participation by a hearer, reaching out to him and asking that his own experience be used as the immediate data and reference for what is being said. A sermon is not "on something" so much as it is a story *of* the hearer. In theatrical terms, the functional story invites a "suspension of disbelief." Something about the presentation rings true, is self-involving for the participant, and vibrates on the rock bottom of his "real world." But simultaneously there is a distance, a mediateness, a moratorium-quality to the story which keeps it from being confused with the primary perception of everyday experience. Lose either characteristic—the self-involvement or the mediateness—and you have lost the story function, regardless of the form (a lesson that neither fundamentalism nor neo-orthodoxy ever managed to learn!). I strongly suspect that the best preaching has learned to preserve that balance, and becomes almost by definition a functional story.

---

[5] Richard Gardner, *Therapeutic Communication With Children: The Mutual Story-telling Technique* (New York, 1971).

The story is not only woven from a hearer's own experience, but it is also a message whose impact is felt at the level of his basic expectations and assumptions about existence. The story runs deep. That is mainly why I argue that the story function is so vital for religious communication, since our theological commitments seek always that same basic level of "full depth," the dimension of "what is seen and more." [6] The story is not something told "after hours" when the rugged business of coping with reality is through; quite the contrary, the story is the way human beings decide consciously and unconsciously what *is* real, valuable, interrelated and important. [7] For the preacher to help cultivate that process through his communication is for him to get in on the ground floor of all that is vital to his people's needs and growth.

Perhaps all that is needed as a last word is the thought that when we help the preacher discover how to do that, we should easily have heard the last of comments about the irrelevance and impotence of preaching.

APPENDIX

A Communication Bill of Rights for Congregations

A line in one of W. E. Orchard's prayers reads, "So often we pray for that which is already ours, neglected and unappropriated; so often for that which never can be ours; so often for that which we must win ourselves. . . ." [8] Perhaps our thinking and worrying about preaching has sometimes got itself backwards in somewhat the same ways.

I have often noticed preachers struggling to induce or manufacture certain kinds of congregational participation and response which, honestly, the congregation was willing and ready to give without effort if only they were allowed the chance. Perhaps we have underrated them in certain key areas, which the following "Bill of Rights" tries to spotlight. My underlying principle is this: Human beings for the most part do not need to be *taught* to communicate; they do need to be *allowed* to.

1. Give your people credit for recognizing and prizing imagination in preaching, no matter how experimental the message form.
(To the preacher who says his people cannot appreciate the finest fruits of his imagination, I have to ask, first,

---

[6] See especially Ian Ramsey, *Religious Language* (New York, 1957) and Langdon Gilkey, *Naming the Whirlwind: The Renewal of God-Language* (Indianapolis, 1969).

[7] For the four-fold concept, though not related to stories, see George Gerbner, "An Institutional Approach to Mass Communications Research," in Lee Thayer, *Communication Theory and Research* (Springfield, 1967) pp. 429 ff.

[8] In Harry Emerson Fosdick, *The Meaning of Prayer* (New York, 1949) p. 112.

whether the fruit is ripe enough to eat, and second, whether he has offered them a good selection lately.)

2. Give your people credit for empathizing with the preacher who truly struggles with his sermon, and for valuing that struggle no matter what the outcome.

> (For example, the preacher who confesses to his people, "I haven't finished this sermon because I honestly don't have any final answers, and I'm still struggling with it" will, I suspect, find an eager participation in his struggle rather than the rejection he fears for not having produced a finished masterpiece.)

3. Give your people credit for wanting to share the biblical experience, but not to worship it or bow reflexively to its authority.

> (It can be a homiletical revelation to discover that biblical contents are neither *kerygma* nor *didache*, but first and foremost reflections on religious experience. Call them "residues" of dramatically changed understanding and living, attempts to share episodes of religious growth and perception—and the Bible suddenly comes alive. The Bible is neither to be "believed" nor "revered," but rather to be *joined*.)

4. Give your people credit for seeking consciously and actively a personal connection between their life-situations and the words you are saying.

> (I am worried about the preacher who struggles to create bridges of relevance between his sermon and his people, and who worries endlessly about "reaching" his people and "involving" them with what he is saying. If a preacher is truly sharing his congregation's life and struggle, then tuning into his own needs is a fair place to start getting in touch with theirs. The homiletical question ought to be (more often than we admit) "What do I want to say to myself?")

5. Give your people credit for appreciating being allowed to share the dynamics of sermon preparation itself, even if the message is not so smooth and finished as you would like.

> (Amazingly, many preachers never hint that their messages have come out of all kinds of study, conversation, false starts, fragments of experience, and a fair amount of anxiety. I have often found that telling my people what I started out wanting to say, and what difficulties

and opportunities I encountered along the road of creating a message to say it, was itself as good a sermon as I could have wanted! There is an educator's rule of thumb at work here: once you have made clear to students what the objective of your teaching is, most of your teaching has already been done!)

6. *Give your people credit for sharing, forgiving, and even growing from the homiletical duds that you preach.*

(Perhaps a surgeon cannot afford to relax about his failures, but surely a preacher can. I do believe I have gotten closer to many in my congregation by confessing—and even laughing about—sermons that fizzled than by receiving their praise for those which soared! The sermon that failed may also communicate an essential message in its own peculiar way, leading to the response from a congregation, "If the preacher has trouble with that idea (text, problem, incident) too, I don't feel quite so alone out here.")

7. *Give your people credit for being open to conflict and controversy in preaching, perhaps more so than you yourself.*

(The great emotional, social and developmental issues of human growth and relationship are in one way or another conflict management issues. It is hard to see how preaching which does *not* relate to the growth conflicts of people's lives can be preaching "where the people are.")

8. *Give your people credit for being able both to enjoy and benefit from a sermon.*

(It is depressing how many people feel guilty when they actually enjoy and are entertained by a sermon. It is just as depressing to hear sermons in which it is painfully obvious that the preacher has made an almost conscious effort to purge his message of any lightness, intrigue, narrative interest or linguistic color. A preacher would do well to keep in mind that some of the most effective communication in human history has come from the age-old figure of the story-teller, whose product was enjoyable before it was anything else.)

9. *Give your people credit for perceiving and valuing the connections, theme and wholeness among sermon and other elements of worship.*

(A preacher loses a lot of communication energy if he

assumes that his message starts or stops with the sermon itself. It is not even too much to rely on such worship elements as calls to worship, confessions, hymns, scripture (of course), and prayers to carry much of the message of the sermon, especially in introductory and concluding ways. I am convinced that people *do* make those connections, and are well able without much prompting on the preacher's part to perceive the worship experience as a total message.)

10. Give your people credit for wanting to "learn the language" of religious experience and expression.

(The dynamics of religious language in theory have to do with expressing deep feelings, needs, and convictions beyond the realm of ordinary description. In practice, that means that religious language used by the preacher appropriate to its expressive dynamic is *not* something alien to his people. Theological language applied descriptively or metaphysically is a different matter, and some would say that such talk is alien not only to congregations but also to theology! Preachers who worry that their people will be afraid of God-talk or unresponsive to it may not be probing deeply enough into either the work of language or the felt needs people have to communicate and interpret their deepest experience.)

CONCLUSION: Allowing people to participate in communication may indeed take some hard work—to help them be free from rigid patterns, to support them in expressing difficult or tabooed thoughts and feelings, or to encourage their searching for new and different ways of expression. But the tide is running *with* communication, not against it. The "Communication Bill of Rights" is simply an attempt to chart the current, and to encourage preachers to get over what for some is a morbid fear that anything natural and positive about preaching must be wrong!

CHRISTIAN FAITH AS EVENT: IMPLICATIONS FOR WORSHIP AND PREACHING

David James Randolph, Ph.D.

*Preaching is not a problem to be solved
but a potential to be developed.*

We are united by the desire to hear a truly redemptive word and haunted by the thought that that word is the Gospel of Jesus Christ, if we could ever really let it express itself through us.

A man said to me recently, "It seems that all we hear about these days is salvation: save the air, save the water, save the country. What I want to know is, is there any power in the universe that can save *me*?" The remark was all the more poignant in that it came from a minister of the Gospel.

Salvation—that is what persons are seeking today. Salvation—that is what Christianity is about. There *is* power in the universe that can save me, and this power is none other than the power of God which can lead us to save the air, the water, the country. Why, then, is the Christian message not more adequately addressing your need?

At the heart of the matter, I am convinced, is the tendency to think of faith as an object, with liturgy and worship and preaching being a way in which this "thing" is presented to people. I have dealt with the philosophical and theological background of this elsewhere and will not go into detail here.[1] The main point is that a whole new situation presents itself when we come to see Christian faith as "event" rather than "object." Faith as event is an historical rather than a naturalistic category. Faith *occurs*. It confronts persons in the present, deals with their past, and opens up a new future (event comes from the same Latin root as venture). Worship and preaching which proceed from this understanding are *happenings*. Congregations are not spectators

---

[1] See *The Renewal of Preaching* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1969).

but participants. They are drawn into the event in which the liturgist/preacher is himself participating.

Francis McConnell tells of one of his early preaching assignments in which he delivered a very fine and very long sermon. After a while one honest if impolite man muttered, "Well, well, well, been goin' on forty minutes here and nothin's happened yet!"

There is no need to elaborate. Most of us have been in that situation. We have spoken but nothing has happened. The vacant stare, the undisguised yawn, the whispered exchange of one to another in the congregation has greeted our homiletic efforts. Essentially nothing happened because we did not understand that it should. We thought of the sermon as an essay to be presented rather than an event in which hearer and speaker participate.

An event is similar to the experience of insight described by Wolfgang Kohler and the Gestalt psychologists. A monkey is placed in a cage where bananas hang from the top. A stick is in the cage. The monkey wants the bananas but he cannot reach them no matter how he climbs and jumps. He retires to the corner and broods. Then, suddenly, he sees the stick in line with the bananas. Aha! He takes the stick, knocks down the bananas, and enjoys them.

The "Aha!" phenomenon occurs when a person gets a line of vision on his life which opens new possibilities for him. It should happen characteristically in Christian worship. As he contemplates his life with its needs and longings, Christ "comes alive" as the source of insight which enables him to overcome past and present difficulties to enter a new future of faith.[2]

Christian faith is itself *event*. Faith is not a thing one possesses but a history in which one participates. God the Father is a god who literally "makes history." Jesus Christ turns history around from the sinful deflection introduced by man. The Holy Spirit is the Consummator of history. To participate in the Christian faith is to happen into a new history, a new way of life.

Let us look at some of the implications for worship and preaching which follow from an understanding of Christian faith as event.

WORSHIP

One of the great stories of our time is the revolution in worship. The real significance of this movement lies not in helium-filled balloons and dancers in the aisle, but rather in the way in

---

[2] Like all analogies, this one must not be pressed too far. Christ is not an instrument to achieve our goals any more than man is a monkey. The analogy is between the experience of insight and the event of faith.

which liturgy is being developed as event. Worship as "celebration" is an ancient theme, as we know from the language of "celebrating the Mass." In the present day worship as celebration means not only the public declaration of faith but the "happening" of faith, the coming alive of faith in worship. Worship is seen increasingly not as a package but as an occurrence.[3]

It is my own conviction that the current revolution in worship is an historic movement as significant as the Protestant Reformation. Indeed, in many ways it is an extension of the Protestant Reformation, with the concept of "the priesthood of every believer" now expressing itself in new ways. There are at least four basic changes by which worship is tending to become more eventful today.

First there is the process by which liturgy is shaped. More and more liturgical materials and their overall design are being prepared by the worshipers. This is the basic extension of the principle of the priesthood of every believer to which we have just referred. No longer does this mean simply that persons in the service participate by the singing of hymns or responsive readings, but rather that they participate in the shaping of the materials themselves. Thus more and more congregations are preparing the prayers of confession as well as affirmations of faith, and shaping the overall design.

Second, there are changes in language. The pattern of worship may remain basically the same but contemporary language is used in place of the traditional. Such changes are the mildest and perhaps the most widespread form of liturgical change. Even this does not come easy, however, if the task is seen as interpreting abiding meanings in contemporary terms and not just substituting new words for old.

Third, there are changes in structure. The basic order of the elements of worship may be changed, as well as their language. We're all familiar with the traditional pattern in which worship moves from Adoration to Confession to Thanksgiving to Proclamation to Service, or some variation of this. Now, more and more the basic order of service tends to be missional. That is, the service is grouped around such basic aspects as: a) the people gather, b) to hear the Word of God, and c) to move forth in mission. Or in the order of Holy Communion the element of Thanksgiving has a more dominant place. These changes in structure tend to make the service more eventful.

Fourth, there are changes of style. Here I refer to the whole way in which worship is conceived and carried out. There is a

---

[3] See David James Randolph, editor, *Ventures in Worship, Ventures in Worship II, Ventures in Worship III,* and *Ventures in Song,* all published by Abingdon Press.

new consciousness of what worship is and of what its sources are. Many new media, from film slides to video-tape, are being used in worship. A fresh approach to the environment of worship is changing not only the arrangement of chairs or pews within the sanctuary, but of the very concept of "sacred space." There is a new understanding of the environments and actions which express worship as well as set the stage for it. I use the language "set the stage" because I think it is more appropriate to the more dramatic understanding of worship which we are seeing.

Quite practically, then, any one of us may assess the worship for which we are responsible in terms of whether or not it is becoming more truly an event by asking ourselves these four questions:

1) How can the people who worship take a more active part in *preparing* the service of worship?

2) What changes in language would make the service more meaningful?

3) What changes in structure would make the service of worship more useful?

4) What changes of style would create greater participation?

PREACHING

Turning to preaching in particular, I am convinced that the basic need of homiletics today lies in a more fundamental and dynamic definition of what preaching is. Our basic need is not for collections of "snappy sermon starters" or even extensive multi-media devices. We need rather a sharper, more adequate understanding of just what preaching is and what it may do, and I think this new definition should follow the direction of event. Let me define my own understanding: preaching is the event in which the biblical text is interpreted in such a way that its meaning comes to expression in the concrete situation of the hearers.

There are three key terms in this definition.

First, preaching is event. A real sermon is an act, a happening, an occurrence. It is confrontation between preacher and people, between the reality of God and the realities of daily life.

The sermon is not an argument but an action. The sermon is not an essay but an event. To know this will lead the preacher to design his sermons in terms of what he hopes will happen. To know this is to view the sermon as a collision between the reality of God and daily life and to consider neither of them out of relation to the other. The sermon is prepared and presented so this crash can occur.

Secondly, preaching should be biblical. Of course—but in what sense? As a code of law? As a set of propositions? As advice on how to succeed?

No, biblical preaching is more than taking texts from the Bible and quoting from Scripture. That would be true only to the letter. Preaching which is true to the spirit as well is that in which not only the datum but the demand and direction of the sermon proceed from the Bible as God's living Word.

Emil Brunner was fascinated by the trademark employed by the RCA Company on their instruments. That emblem showed a dog sitting before an old Victrola with a large cone-shaped amplifier. Beneath the picture was the phrase, "His Master's Voice." Brunner went on to say that the Christian attends to Scripture as the dog to the recording. He does not listen for the cracks in the record; he listens for his Master's voice.

Preaching is not biblical when a sermon traces a biblical theme from Genesis to Revelation with special emphasis on the Eighth Century prophets and concludes by suggesting that perhaps this has significance for us today. That kind of research should be done in the study and its documentation left there. Such preaching stops just where it should start. Preaching is biblical when through the Bible men hear the Master's voice pointing the way, giving assurances for the tasks of today.

Third, preaching speaks to our concrete situations. The sermon is of this time, of this place. It gets down to the nitty-gritty. Hearing it, the people know that, whatever his faults, the preacher is a man of his time. He knows the fears which make their stomachs shudder and the hopes which make their faces shine. He has an acute awareness of what it means to be alive.

In the film *Mr. Roberts* we see a ship bogged down in the Pacific while somewhere in the distance World War II is going on. Excitement finally erupts when a washing machine goes haywire deep within the ship. First the suds ooze out of the machine. Then they cover the floor of the room. They seep into the corridor and fill it up. Gradually they creep upward until the whole ship seems covered with white suds and in the memorable words of Ensign Pulver, it looks like a Winter Wonderland!

When I saw that scene I thought of some sermons I had heard and preached. Like those suds these sermons covered everything and cleaned nothing. Preaching that is truly interpretation is different. It is more like a bar of soap slapped in the hand of the hearer with the words, "This is where you can take hold of what the text means in our soiled situations." It may be slippery, but the hearer knows that it is within his grasp to get to work. Great preaching has just this concreteness about it, whether it

was Martin Luther or Martin Luther King, Jr., who was preaching. Christian faith is force, not foam, though we discover it only as we get to work in the concrete situations in the light of the glowing Word.

CONCLUSION

To understand Christian faith as event is to find a new power and a new range of resources for worship and preaching. I have only been able to suggest some of the possibilities here. However, I must close with a note on the irony of preaching. To understand faith, worship, and preaching as event is to understand the man of faith as a man *between*. He is a man in a bind. He is a man between God and his fellows. That is his burden and his glory.

I think often of the word *Keryx* which is the Greek word for herald from which our word *Kerygma* comes. The preacher is the herald who announces God's good news. The original herald, however, was an agent of the kind who would go through the streets in advance of the ruler urging people to clean up the streets. He would cry out "The king is coming! The king is coming!" That sounds like a very royal task, but anyone who has been through a street in the Middle East even to this day knows how treacherous that task could be. There were no sophisticated sanitary systems in those days, and garbage and other dirt would simply be thrown out on the street. The herald, then, was the man who trudged through that trash, sometimes up to his ankles, crying out the good news that the king was coming.

Anybody who tries to preach today knows that the streets of life still are full of all kinds of trash. But to proclaim the Gospel is to cry out the good news that even in the midst of all this, the greatest of all kings is coming. On the horizon of every darkness, the light of the kingdom of God is breaking even now. This is why preaching is not a problem to be solved but a potential to be developed.

CONFERENCE CONCLUSIONS

Part 1[1]

As the Homiletics Conference proceeded, it became clear that there was general agreement on a number of points, although some were contested. There was no contest, however, about the conviction that there is an enormous potential for the future to be developed in preaching.

This sense of excitement about the potential of preaching rested on the high value placed upon preaching by all the participants. One of the most striking aspects of this high value was that the claim was not made arbitrarily or defensively but rather in terms of the *functions* of preaching. That is, nothing was claimed for "preaching" as having some kind of magic power. Instead, high value was placed upon preaching because of what preaching *does* or may do. The following functions of preaching were referred to by one or more consultants:

1) Preaching delivers the message of great events: the Creation, Redemption, fulfillment.

2) Preaching interprets the biblical language of faith.

3) Preaching establishes agreements among persons.

4) Preaching creates group identity.

5) Preaching helps people deal with their problems.

6) Preaching helps build a sense of individual worth.

7) Preaching gives people credit for their ability.

8) Preaching tells the Story which gives insight and coherence to personal social existence.

9) Preaching expresses the sense of mission of the preacher.

10) Preaching articulates the ministry the preacher lives.

11) Preaching is a means of response to the divine call.

12) Preaching brings to expression the totality of ministry.

13) Preaching keeps alive the tradition, the history of the Church.

---

[1] At the conclusion of the conference, civilian consultants and military chaplains reflected separately on the two-day event. Dr. Randolph in Part I and Chaplain (LTC) Joseph E. Galle in Part II summarize their understanding of the conference highlights. Chaplain Galle also served as conference coordinator.

14) Preaching builds up the Church.

15) Preaching helps shape history through individuals and groups which transform the world.

Simply citing these functions does not show the depth of each function. Some of these matters are only now being researched. The citation, however, does give some indication of the range of reference for the consultants and emphasizes the important point that the high value of preaching is being understood today not in arbitrary but in functional terms.

On several basic issues there was further agreement. First, preaching is a theological activity. Preaching proceeds from our basic understandings of who God is and how he acts. The theology of preaching lies at the base of homiletics and is in need of further exploration.

Second, the subject matter of preaching is the biblical message in relation to contemporary human experience. Preaching does not have an "object" in the sense of a "stone" which is "hurled" at the world, but rather a subject matter which has the character of a message to be interpreted.

Third, the sermon is understood as an event which takes place in interaction between the preacher and the congregation. The hearer is not a passive "bottle" into which information is poured. He is rather an active creator of what is taking place. "Involvement," "immediacy," "trust," and "insight" were different terms by which participants sought to get at the quality of interaction between congregation and preacher.

Several areas in need of further exploration surfaced.

1) The relationship between conflict and reconciliation. The conciliatory or consoling factor in religion is very important in popular understanding. Studies indicate, however, that an element of conflict seems to be necessary in order for fresh understanding to come. Randall Nichols in particular has conducted research which connects conflict inescapably with the basic Christian events. Further development of this theme, however, is needed.

2) The relationship between reality and experience needs further development. When we place stress upon interaction and "experience," we need at the same time to be aware of the way in which the reality of God transcends human experience. What is the relationship between the ontological and the epistomological? Or, how do we relate the question of what is to the question of how we know?

3) The relation of language experience remains problematical. Does language express, does it convey, does it point? Does

language merely sum up our human experience, or does it point to realities beyond our human experience? Does it do both or all these things, and if so, how?

4) Reason and emotion need further study. Preaching must appeal to the whole person; that is agreed. But how may we extend communication to the whole person without becoming absorbed in a sensitivity that has no point of contact outside itself?

5) Further study needs to be given to the relationship between the pastoral and the prophetic. Military chaplains are caught in this tension as all ministers of the Gospel are, although in a somewhat special way. The Word of God is in some sense always a Word over against, as well as in behalf of man and his institutions. For example, when a military chaplain finds himself in a situation where he is called upon to utter a prophetic word on the subject of war and peace, what means of understanding and support does the system of the chaplaincy have for him? How is he to understand what is expected in this regard, and how is he to seek resolution where conflict may develop?

If the potential of preaching is to be developed in the military as elsewhere, there needs to be developed a pool of resources and a network of personnel. No single approach, no single person, can hope to develop the enormous potential which is before us.

One of the great opportunities which the military chaplaincy provides is that of developing resources and providing networks. The following elements should be included in an overall system of training in homiletics:

1) Literature.

2) Audio-visual aids including films, filmstrips, cassettes, records, etc.

3) Programs of human development which stress the communicator as person.

4) Special programs employing video-tape as a learning device.

5) Instruments for testing.

6) Surveys.

7) Means of self-study.

8) Special attention to non-verbal communication.

9) Programs of intensive and extensive periods of study.

10) Development of grants for special studies, e.g., audience analyses.

PART II

Throughout the conference the civilian consultants and mili-

tary chaplains stressed the importance and value of preaching. It was affirmed that preaching:

a. Delivers the message of Salvation, Redemption and Sanctification.

b. Declares and interprets the great events (Creation, Incarnation, Redemption, Resurrection) and acts of God.

c. Establishes agreements among people.

d. Develops community and group solidarity.

e. Helps people deal with their problems.

f. Helps people to build a sense of individual worth. People come alive to God, self and others.

g. Should give people credit for their abilities and creative capacities to respond to the Gospel.

h. Tells the Story which gives meaning and insight to our lives.

i. Expresses the preacher's sense of mission, of being sent from God.

j. Articulates the ministry as a whole, for it includes love, care and concern for people.

k. Responds both to the divine call and the needs of our fellow man.

l. Brings to expression the totality of our ministry in that the sermon is a microcosm of ministry.

These preaching values reveal to some extent the content of the discussions. It was felt that these are realities rooted in the Christian Church's mission and in the lives of people. The consensus was that preachers have undervalued preaching. The time has come for a fresh emphasis; in fact, a renewal has already begun. The question was posed, "Are we willing to be the messengers?" Almost every speaker, moreover, affirmed that we must "get with preaching or we are dead."

In addition, certain themes kept surfacing:

a. The sermon takes place in interaction between preacher and people. Preaching's context is the worshipping community, in which there is both giving and receiving, speaking and listening. It is an event.

b. The subject matter of the sermon should be the biblical message related to contemporary human experience.

c. Lay persons are a vital part of preaching. Their perceptions are valuable and afford the preacher an opportunity for sermon feedback and improvement.

Observations:

a. Civilian consultants: The resource persons stated that

preaching is at a low ebb across the board, but they indicated that an apparent renewal has begun. It was stressed that, as chaplains, we should ask ourselves, "What is the state of *my* preaching?" rather than ask, "What is the state of preaching?" They also indicated that effective preaching is being done wherever the Word of God is being faithfully proclaimed. Lack of motivation was singled out as being the primary barrier to homiletical improvement. This is so because many have lost their sense of mission and do not engage in disciplined preparation. It was further observed that each preacher should be approached as a unique person. One who desires to enhance the preaching of others should approach each preacher in terms of his potential rather than his problems. Preaching was described as an impossible possibility. The preacher is a herald; he is not the message. Preaching at its best brings wholeness, health, salvation to the preacher and the people, to pulpit and pew.

b. Chaplain participants: Participating chaplains agreed that homiletical enhancement was essential. They discussed approaches to general homiletical improvement, and the following observations were made:

(1) Where necessary, senior chaplains should serve as pastoral "buffers" between junior chaplains and commanders so as to secure for these chaplains adequate time for sermon preparation and to underscore preaching's importance in the life of the command.

(2) "Preaching" libraries should be built at installation level. Theological books and periodicals should be available for study and reflection.

(3) Jewish chaplains should be included in homiletical enhancement programs. They also have needs to be met and can make a contribution by teaching Old Testament studies. It was also felt that Jewish chaplains could participate in those aspects of the program which treat technique and communication.

(4) The area of pastoral *continuity* needs to be examined. Chaplains should be allowed to remain with a congregation so as to identify more closely with the people. Shifting chaplains from chapel to chapel disrupts continuity. Developing a sense of community is crucial.

(5) Chaplains should be sent back to seminary for two or three week refresher courses in preaching. This would underscore the significance of preaching and would help raise the quality.

(6) Supervisory chaplains at each level should be pastors to other chaplains. This means providing support, counseling and

motivational means regarding their preaching. This should be characterized by love, mutual respect and concern for one another. It was felt that supervisory chaplains could, in a worship context, preach to those under their supervision and then ask for discussion and constructive criticism.

(7) Chaplains could help each other with their preaching by encouraging one another to set sermon objectives, i.e., What do I want the people to do as a result of this sermon?

(8) The content and form of preaching-improvement programs should be decided at installation level and tailored to meet local needs.

In conclusion, Saint Paul summed up the value of preaching long ago when he asked, "How shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach, except they be sent?" His answer was clear, "How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the Gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things." (Romans 10:14–15)

RELEVANCE: THE FINAL COP-OUT

Oakley S. Ray, Ph.D.

I'm going to do four things in this article. First, I will comment briefly on the world today, especially the dilemma for the individual which our social and educational practices have created. Second, I will attempt to establish a framework for understanding and for viewing human behavior. Third, these first two elements will be elaborated and combined into principles for action, and, finally, I will use these principles to develop guidelines for education and those involved in education, such as chaplains.

The title of this article gives some indication of the direction of the thinking and provides a brief overview for the general ideas which follow. Today, for most people, the term "relevance" refers to immediate problems, the NOW situation. There is an emphasis on technological solutions to social problems, an emphasis on the immediate, and on short-term solutions to these NOW problems. The term "cop-out" means to deny or escape from responsibility. In the present context the emphasis is on avoiding responsibilities to both the individual and to society. Another aspect of this term refers to an individual denying his beliefs because it's an easier way to survive and maintain one's self today. Finally, most importantly, cop-out means to ignore the personal and social implications of our behavior in an effort to justify our actions.

CULTURAL CRISES

In looking at the world today, at our society, it seems clear that we're in a cultural crisis. A cultural crisis arises when two things occur. A crisis develops when a society, as it is constituted, causes more problems than it is solving and when it does not have the capability to solve the problems which it faces. Cultural crises are always solved by changing the way we view our world. We change the attitudes and values we have about others and

Dr. Ray is a Professor in the Department of Psychology and an Associate Professor in the Department of Pharmacology at Vanderbilt University, where he recently received the Ingalls Award for Excellence in Classroom Teaching. In addition he serves as Chief of Psychology at the VA Hospital in Nashville, Tennessee. He is the author of *Drugs, Society, and Human Behavior.*

ourselves, the beliefs we have about what we are and what we can become, and about the direction society should take and the speed with which it should move. These changes go hand in hand with social, political and economic changes, so that we are not usually aware of our changing view of Man as it occurs.

If we take the historical view, we can see some major previous crises and provide a background for the one in which we find ourselves. The crisis with which most of us are familiar occurred about two thousand years ago. Christ and beliefs about Christ very rapidly became important because the Roman state, politically and spiritually, failed to meet the needs of individuals in that period. Some appreciation of the rapidity with which this new religion spread—this new philosophy, this new way of looking at Man—can be appreciated by realizing that around the year 320 A.D. Sunday closing laws were instituted throughout the Roman world. And this occurred even with the poor communications existing then.

Things changed, however, and Christians shifted their patterns of belief. Originally Christianity sustained itself by looking forward to the imminence of the Second Coming. When it was appreciated that this was not something that was going to happen next week, next year or in the next several years, a state of despair developed. There was a reduction in the beliefs, the faith, that individuals have, and another change occurred in the way people looked at Man and his world. Saint Augustine and other Roman Catholic philosophers taught that man should be content with what he had here on earth. Heaven will be better. Stay in your place, do what you're supposed to do according to your birth and all will come out in the end. Your reward will come later. This philosophy, this way of looking at Man, persisted for over a thousand years from Saint Augustine until the Renaissance and the Reformation. This idea, that one's rights, privileges and responsibilities were primarily determined by birth, was essential to sustain the nobility-landlord-serf type political and economic system which was prevalent, and perhaps necessary, during this period in Europe.

Following the Renaissance and the Reformation came the Age of Enlightenment and the expanding development of science. All of these aspects of society—the awakening of the arts, the revision of religion, the explosion in science and then in technology—served to underline the importance of the individual. This is clear in politics where the French and American revolutions emphasized the individual and gave rise to democracy where every man had rights—just because he was an individual. In economics the emphasis on the individual was expressed

through the laissez-faire philosophy, under which no one attempted to modify or restrict the actions of the individual businessman. One slowly developing aspect was the man-woman relationship. Woman gradually became something more than a chattel, something more than a piece of property that a man owned.

SOCIETY TODAY

Over the last several years Western civilization has seemed to back off from many of these changes which reflected the ideas of the Age of Enlightenment. In economics we no longer hold to a laissez-faire philosophy. More and more we accept the idea that in order for society as a whole to benefit (even to survive), business, particularly big business, must be controlled to a greater and greater extent. There is no question but that the present emphasis on truth in advertising, the establishment of standards such as those urged by Nader and his groups, can only result in the gradual reduction in the number of corporations able to maintain the standards now being demanded. As the options for meeting standards decrease, we are moving toward a period of increasing nationalization of most businesses.

In politics the changes are perhaps more subtle. Few countries ever could afford to be true democracies and most countries have a republican form of government in which the individual elects representatives who then make the decisions. The evidence seems fairly clear that fewer and fewer opportunities exist for the individual in political careers, i.e., in positions where the individual actually has some direct influence on events and actions which do directly influence him. Perhaps the last emphasis on the individual to blossom is that of man-woman relationships. Women, via women's lib, have finally come into their own—demanding, and obtaining in many instances, equality in all spheres. This movement reflects one aspect of the primacy of the individual in today's society.

The increasing emphasis on individual freedom in a technologically sophisticated and affluent country has brought about many changes, of which only a few can be mentioned. Some of the changes are creating major conflicts between the demands of the individual and the potentials of society. One change which has occurred is that many people now believe that they have a *right* to happiness. Happiness is no longer something to be sought after, something to attain, something to work for; rather, happiness is something which society has an obligation to give to the individual. One difficulty is that happiness is more determined by internal factors than by external factors. What is im-

portant is how we *view* things, not reality as it actually exists. Happiness is a relative thing. This is only one small part of the general concept of adaptation, but it is crucial to appreciate that continual happiness seems to be an impossibility. Happiness is labeled special and good only in contrast to other types of experiences. If society is to maximize the satisfaction and happiness of the individual, then it must exert more and more influence on its members, particularly on the beliefs, values and expectations of the individual.

Another change is that today many people believe that because society can do something, because it has the technology to do something, it should in fact be done just because we can do it! The emphasis on using technology to advance individual freedom is a double-edged sword that must be handled carefully. Technology merely replaces one kind of control for another. Even more important perhaps is the fact that the use of technology to ameliorate immediate social problems may create more difficult problems in the future. We have gone too far for anyone to be realistically anti-technology, but it is crucial that we back off a bit from the position of trying to solve social problems with technology. No longer is there unanimity over which problems can be, or should be, solved technologically.

Society also engages in many maladaptive actions, i.e., behavior with short-term gains but possible long-term disadvantages. This is an intensification of an existing pattern in Western civilization: the tendency to react to problems with immediate solutions, readily available but poorly thought out. In the past things have moved slowly, and adjustments—to the problem and to the solution—could be easily made. There was enough looseness in the system so that inappropriate actions had only minimal long-term negative effects. Examples of this could be given from many areas—politics, economics, ecology—but most meaningful here is the fact that more and more we are teaching what we say we don't want to teach. This can be seen in ads on television, billboards and radios, ads that everyone has seen or heard. One of the ads has to do with venereal disease—V.D.: "Even nice people have it." The ads take away some of the onus, some of the burden of having V.D., making it more socially acceptable. Is this the purpose of the ad? Is this, in fact, what we want to teach?

Another ad, equally bad, has to do with the use of drugs. One television commercial shows an individual in a very dingy jail cell, obviously not a comfortable place to live. The main thrust of the ad is that if you have a son or daughter going to visit a foreign country, make sure they stay away from drugs. The

reason given is that foreign countries have much more stringent drug laws than we have in the United States and the possibility of being placed in a cell like the one shown is very high. Surely we don't mean to suggest that it's all right to do drugs here but not in foreign countries. That, however, seems to be what the commercial says to anyone that watches.

To summarize this section, it seems that we are now in another cultural crisis. In our effort to continue expanding the individual's personal freedom and to solve immediate problems, we have sown the seeds of long-term failure. By rushing in with ready solutions to social issues, we create more difficult problems. We are a nation of reactors—we do not look at the long-term effects of our rapid solutions. We do not rationally consider the implications of our social and technological actions.

RECENT BACKGROUND

There are good reasons for believing that we are about to reach the end of our present unplanned increases in personal freedom. These trends actively deny what we know is true about both the individual and society. Some of these contradictions are evident, but it is worthwhile here to summarize the major beliefs about Man which have developed in the last hundred years and have led to the present conflict between the individual and society.

A hundred years ago in Vienna, Freud was just developing Psychoanalysis. It's a world view based on observations made on maladjusted people, i.e., individuals who were unable to adjust to the personal and social stresses they encountered. Essentially Freud felt that an individual had psychological problems because of the socialization process he had gone through, particularly that dealing with sexual drives. The socialization process blunted and distorted the expression of certain basic drives and needs, and it is the thwarting of these needs which caused distress in the individual. Freud's solution to the problems of man was to change the socialization process for everyone, i.e., to release the individual from some of the constraints of society.

Fifty years ago, in the 1920's, Robert Watson in America developed the school of Behaviorism. Watson specifically rejected the idea that man has any needs or drives built in and accepted the concept that all behavior was learned and that almost everyone could learn almost anything. There were no limits on what an individual could do when adequately trained. This emphasis on the equality of man was followed in the 30's by John Dewey, who held that we learn best by doing, and, most importantly, that if we give a free hand to a child, the child will learn what

48

he needs, when he needs it. That is, not only are we all equally capable of learning, but there does not need to be much direction placed on the learning.

In the late 40's and early 50's B. F. Skinner, a Neobehaviorist, clearly stated what is one of the dominant views of Man today: we are what we learn, and what we learn is determined by our present environment. To the extent that we can control the present environment of an individual, to that extent we can control what the individual believes and what he does. In the 1950's and 1960's a different set of beliefs about the nature of Man was elaborated. This philosophy, spearheaded by Rollo May, Abraham Maslow and Carl Rogers, is called humanism. In essence the humanists state that man has a need to utilize, to achieve, an innate potential. That is, they believe that man naturally strives to use all of his potential. This striving is a part of man's developmental process, and when the individual is unable to actualize his potential, as a result of faulty socialization, he suffers distress.

What realities have these world views, these views of Man, violated? In Freud's case, in spite of his enormous contributions to our understanding of the nature of Man, he was limited by his narrow perspective. Seeing only neurotic middle and upper-middle class citizens of Vienna did not provide an adequate sample of the world then, let alone make his work completely and totally relevant to today. Watson—in his reaction against McDougall's instinctual theories—rejected the idea that there were significant genetic differences in behavior potential between individuals. This is certainly compatible with the American belief that all men are created equal, but it does not agree with what we know to be true.

Dewey also made major contributions, particularly in the field of education, but did not recognize the fact that there are many environments in which a child may find himself. As a result, one cannot let the child do what he wants to do in any open environment and have faith that the child will learn what he will need to know today or in the future. Skinner ignores the fact that there are important antecedent conditions, things that happen to an individual before he comes into the present situation. These earlier experiences modify the effect the present environment has on the individual. Finally, Maslow and May, the humanists, have yet to demonstrate that there is evidence for a built-in drive in man for any kind of achievement or actualization of his potentials.

DETERMINANTS OF BEHAVIOR

These comments have been made because it is important to

state a world view, a framework, a philosophy of behavior, a philosophy of the nature of Man. An outline of the philosophy is important for several reasons. First, each particular view of Man suggests the range within which various behaviors can be modified. Second, it suggests those components of behavior which can be changed. Third, only by knowing and formulating concretely a view of Man is it possible to determine which factors operate in a particular situation. Last, knowing the beliefs, it is possible to be more effective in designing situations in which desired behaviors can be developed.

Be very clear, schools will not, cannot, move alone. The role of the chaplain as an educator is to point, to lead, to sell, the beliefs that he has. Another fact which must be emphasized again and again is that we all see with our own eyes; everyone has astigmatism! Nobody sees the picture in exactly the same way as someone else. And, perhaps, no one ever sees reality as it actually is. The best we can do is to shift our beliefs as more information becomes available and as the world changes.

The framework to be presented here categorizes the determinants of behavior. It encompasses three classes of factors which must be considered and evaluated before any kind of meaningful action toward behavioral change can be taken. One of these factors is biological, another is behavioral, the final is social—the interaction of individuals with each other. Two assumptions underline this system. The first is determinism, which only says that events are lawful and that every event has a cause. In other words, there are no ghosts; things don't just happen! Secondly, there is the assumption of finite causation, which says that there's a limited number of causes for any particular event. As a corollary we also assume that, no matter how hard we strive, we can never identify all the causes for a particular event.

Genetics is one of the frequently overlooked but most important determinants of behavior. What genetics does is to set the limit on the types of behavior an individual can produce, and also on the rate at which that limit is reached. The data are very clear in some areas. In intelligence, learning ability, the genetic makeup of an individual has much to do with his ability to learn new information and think abstractly, to develop concepts. An area in which there is less frequent comment being made is that of physiological responsivity. Some individuals are very responsive to their environment, and when potent stimuli impinge on the individual the body responds with large and lasting physiological changes. Other individuals, because of their genetic makeup, show a small response, or at the very most a large but very short response, to the same stimulus.

The second determinant is *early experience.* The early experiences of an individual determine the extent to which his genetic potential can be developed. Note particularly that the effect of early experiences is to limit and restrict the development of genetic potential. One can never go beyond the genetic potential. Everything that comes after conception only decreases the behavioral potentials of the individual. Many examples could be used, but only three will be mentioned. One is the amount of stimulation the infant receives. If the child is inadequately stimulated in his early months, then he does not develop at a normal rate. Emotionally, intellectually and physically, his rate of growth will be slower than that of a normally stimulated child. Another area in which the early experiences of an individual are important in restricting later behavior is adequate nutrition. With low levels of protein, pre or postnatally, the nervous system does not mature normally and the genetic potential of the individual can never be reached. Lastly, in a social context, is the finding that unless the child has adequate interactions with both adults and peers early in his life, he will never overcome this deprivation and establish normal, positive, interpersonal relationships in later years.

The third determinant of our behavior is the *life space,* or the environment, in which the individual exists. What the life space does is determine the range of behaviors which are available to the individual. The individual can only develop those behaviors that the environment allows him to develop. Looked at another way, it can also be seen that what the environment does is to force certain behaviors on an individual if he is to survive.

Learning is the fourth determinant of behavior. Learning determines which behavior, of all the possible behaviors available in a particular environment, will be selected by the individual and will persist. In fact, learning is really the final determinant in selecting a particular behavior, at least for animals.

To this point man and animal are alike. Genetics, early experience and past learning determine the stimuli in the environment to which the organism will respond. Genetics, early experience and past learning determine which of the behaviors available in the environment will be produced and maintained. The conceptualization thus far makes the organism the reactor. He can only respond to the immediate situation on the basis of his past experiences.

Man, however, has unique characteristics—one of which is the use of complex symbols and language, and therefore the ability to bind time. This results in several important factors which most people overlook. Language gives man the capacity, the

capability, of rising above his animal heritage, the possibility of developing characteristics which are uniquely human.

The final determinant of behavior in man, and a direct result of his ability to use language, is his *expectancies*, his hopes, his future goals. In man the expectancies that an individual has can be one of the most important determinants of behavior. This is particularly important to consider because the expectancies of an individual can be influenced. The expectancies that an individual holds become important because they are one of the factors that give him stability in a world of change.

EXPECTANCIES

The expectancies that an individual has about himself are of particular importance in determining his behavior in the present. Other factors push from the past; expectancies pull from the future. A combination of antecedent conditions plus expectancies result in what has been called life style. Life style determines what the individual does in the present.

Expectancies have become particularly important today. The push from the past is weakening rapidly. No longer do we emphasize the individual's cultural, national, racial, religious or socio-economic background. These factors do not have the same meaning today as they have had in the past. All these antecedent conditions—all of them make up part of the push that determines the individual's behavior. A second factor that increases the importance of expectancies is that the life spaces which are available today are much too numerous and too complex to give automatic stability to the individual. There are many environments, many life spaces in which the individual may find himself in today's society. Thirty years ago there were fewer possible environments, subcultures, in which to reside. As a result it was easier to prepare a child for his adult life, i.e., it was easier to predict the environment in which he would live.

Many people have commented that the one thing most lacking in modern man are goals. He has nothing to aim for. Without goals to move toward we have only the NOW, the present situation. One then has to seek pleasure and satisfaction in the immediate environment. The only things which exist in the immediate—in the present—are sensations, experiences. As a result, anything that maximizes experiences, sensations, is sought out vigorously: drugs, sex, Eastern religions, mysticism. All of these behaviors may be part of an effort by the individual without goals to find some satisfaction in what is, to him, a meaningless world.

Is it enough reason for man to develop long-term goals, ex-

pectancies, just because he is capable of it? Are there other reasons, more personal, more individual, to reach out for a pull from the future? One of the best reasons for the individual to establish ties to the future is to build more control into himself. Three overlapping but separable ideas are pertinent here. By building in long-term goals, the individual has a sense of identity; that is, a me-ness. Second, the individual has stability over time. And last, the long-term goals serve to decrease the present, prevalent, personal malignancy: existential anxiety.

Only when there are some long-term goals, standards, expectancies, can the individual experience an identity independent of the immediate environment. As long as a person is a response machine reacting solely to the stimuli presented by his environment, he has no identity. The person feels, and is in fact, dependent on the present situation. When the environment changes, the individual changes. The loss of personal identity is not only the beginning of the psychological death of the individual, but also the development of the interchangeability of people in society.

When this happens an individual has no specific value to society; he has no identity. The only important factor is the slot he occupies. We have been moving toward a situation in which we change lovers, bosses, and friends easily and frequently because only the general service they provide is important, not the individual. Unless an individual brings some uniqueness to his position, an identity, he can be replaced with another equally skilled person or with a machine.

The sense of personal identity, me-ness, as a continuing entity seems to have particular relevance to the existential anxiety that is prevalent today. Many people appear in psychologist's and psychiatrist's offices looking for help in solving their problems. More and more frequently the problem is not anxiety over what they have done, or what they haven't done, but instead it is anxiety over who they are—an anxiety over what their relationship should be with others, with the environment and with themselves. They feel hollow, like empty shells buffeted by the immediate environment. There is an existential anxiety, anxiety over the absence of meaning in their lives. As a friend who is a psychotherapist recently said, "Most of my patients aren't looking for a therapist, they're searching for a guru."

Long-term goals provide the individual with stability against the changing environment. With stability—a continuing element that persists relatively unchanged under the pressures of the present—the individual acquires a personal identity, a me-ness that makes possible meaningful and lasting relationships with

others and with society. Any meaningful relationship is a sure preventive agent against existential anxiety.

The increasing emphasis on the NOW has carried with it the shift from society being responsible for an individual's behavior to each individual being responsible for his own behavior. This had to follow from the emphasis on the present, because society has to be concerned with groups and with continuous satisfaction for most members rather than with the immediate, maximal satisfaction of the individual. The shift in responsibility means that the individual is regularly faced with decisions previously made for him in the form of social rules.

The premature assumption of personal responsibility is the source of much discomfort and anxiety today. There is considerable ambiguity in many situations because there are no guidelines. The already prevalent feeling of isolation and impotence is increased; there is no place to turn. The individual is separated from others, deserted, by the admonition, "do your own thing."

The clamor for relevance is the cry of those shut off from the future. Relevance is a NOW thing—there's no lasting pleasure or meaning. Relevance provides immediate, but only temporary relief to perennial problems. The insistence on relevance comes only from those who have no goals, no plans, no directions.

There is too much emphasis on the immediate individual. We treat ourselves and others like animals by failing to consider what the individual can become, what goals from the future should be pulling the person. How can the individual be freed from his immediate, transient, environment? This, of course, is a problem which chaplains constantly address.

GUIDELINES FOR ACTION

As mentioned, one of the most basic factors that separates man from animals is that through language, the use of symbols, man can develop expectancies about the future. These expectancies provide goals to aim for, and these goals can give present behavior a pull from the future that matches or exceeds the push from the past. By establishing both past performances and future anticipations, the individual is able to free himself from the present.

When the individual is controlled only by the past and the present environment, his behavior is much less internally directed and thus less free. In this situation an individual's behavior is many times more variable and is easily manipulated and influenced by the immediate situation. Without goals to move toward, there are few behaviors for which one can rein-

force one's self. This loss of ability to reward one's own behavior makes the individual almost completely dependent on the immediate environment. As such he is an easily influenced person.

It must again be appreciated that goals, plans and expectancies have to be built into the individual by the environment. Only if the environment makes it possible for the individual to acquire the potential for self-reinforcement can he find release from the direct, immediate and continued control by the stimuli which surround him. The emphasis must be on the individual. He must be given the capability of reinforcing himself. To do this he must be able to rise above his immediate environment, that is, have the necessary skills and attitudes to do so. Only when the person can separate himself from his present surroundings can he truly have the opportunity of selecting a choice, making a decision about his behavior. As long as he is tied to his immediate environment, the individual has no choices open to him.

There is a fine line to walk between the situation where one builds into an individual unrealistic expectancies, and that where no behavior is future oriented. With unrealistic, and thus unobtainable expectancies, the individual is forced to find frustration and failure, which leads inevitably to unhappiness. The danger on the other side develops when rewards are given with little relationship to an individual's behavior. Then the situation develops in which there are no satisfactions beyond the immediate environment.

Before an individual can reach the freedom which comes from being able to reinforce one's self, he must develop standards to meet or goals to move toward. With this capacity, however, goes the potential to experience failure, anxiety and unhappiness. By elevating one's self above his environment, that is, by giving one's self an identity, the individual acquires the ability to experience either satisfaction or discomfort, pain or pleasure.

What of free will in this view? The framework mentioned here maximizes the control the individual has over himself. Only by responding to the pull from the future can the individual find freedom from the present. Without these goals each person moves like an animal from one stimulus input to another. Without these goals the individual is completely controlled by his present situation. He has lost the possibility of making decisions.

When freedom is sought from the immediate, is there a way to avoid control from the goals? Probably yes. Not only is freedom achieved, but a high level of free will, that is, un-

predictable behavior. Too often goals are taught, and then the paths to the goals are taught. This only substitutes one form of control for another. Instead of behavior being controlled by the immediate environment, it is controlled by the past. Teaching narrow paths to goals ignores the present reality. This would reduce the individual's adaptability and return the potentially human organism to the level of an instinctual animal where once a sequence is started the whole behavior chain must be completed, regardless of varying factors. A better plan is to teach the goals and then a range of options and skills from which the individual can select his sub-goals, his directions.

CONCLUDING COMMENT

Where do we go as individuals, as chaplains? The initial step is to realize that there are two types of problems. The first is the immediate collection of crises, whether you want to emphasize drugs, sex, race, family or whatever. These must of course be dealt with. Appreciate well, however, that the actions to meet the present crises rarely are adequate measures to prevent future crises from developing or the present ones from recurring. The second problem, then, has to do with the prevention or reduction of future crises. This is an educational process and, like any other educational process, the earlier you start the more likely success is.

As chaplains it seems imperative that you carefully consider your impact on those you work with and teach. Depending on the type of interaction you have with others in the present, you can become a meaningful part of their past. In becoming a part of their past, you can become a determinant of their future. Remember that each person is in a state of continuous flux, always changing. Some are moving toward goals, taking chances, getting satisfactions, becoming freer. Others are regressing to old plateaus, being careful, reducing immediate conflict, losing their potential to control their own behavior. As chaplains you can determine whether or not your people move toward greater freedom and self-determination. It is so easy to become involved in today and avoid tomorrow. By doing so we lose our potential to be free.

Let me summarize some of the things that I've tried to suggest in this article. Over and above everything else, my concern is to increase the individual's happiness and satisfaction and to decrease his fear and anxiety. I suggest that this cannot be done without changing today's social trends. In fact, the great social freedom we now have in our personal lives has reduced our pleasure, our security, our identity, our actual freedom. Increas-

ing happiness and decreasing fear and anxiety seems best accomplished by putting *meaning* into an individual's life. There are two components to this meaning. One is that the individual must be given, must be taught, realistic goals toward which he can work. A second aspect of this is to give the individual a realistic view of himself, an appreciation of what he can and cannot do, of what he can and cannot become.

Above all, do not be caught only in the clamor of the present. To do so is to hurt the individual. Truly, in society today, relevance is the final cop-out.

BOOK REVIEWS

TWO BASIC HOMILETICAL BOOKS

A survey was recently made at 177 seminaries to learn which homiletical books are being used. Professors of homiletics were asked which available texts in homiletics they would *currently* recommend and which they were actually using in their courses.

One book emerged as by far the most significant work: *Design for Preaching* by H. Grady Davis (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1958). The book is in a class by itself. Davis begins with a particularly beneficial chapter on the relationship of substance to form. This single chapter alone is worth the price of the book, which is not another cookbook for sermon-making. Rather, Davis places heavy emphasis upon the nature of the sermon. He presents the sermon as the embodiment (Incarnation) of an idea, an organic whole that must be *designed* as an architect designs a building, rather than constructed as a carpenter builds a garage. Davis believes that "a sermon should be like a tree . . . a living organism . . . with deep roots . . . showing its own unfolding parts . . . bearing flowers and fruits at the same time . . . like the orange . . . growing in a warm climate." This emphasis, his fresh treatment of preaching, plus his lively style combine to make *Design for Preaching* one of the best, if not the best, homiletical text currently available.

Another popular text was Reuel Howe's *Partners in Preaching* (New York: Seabury Press, 1967). While it deals more with a basic philosophy of preaching than with homiletical theory as such, Howe's insight and provocative style offer much to the reader. Howe calls for a dialogue approach in which both preacher and congregation mutually explore the meaning of the Word of God for contemporary times. He also discusses the steps that can be taken in the local church to establish dialogue, and thus to make the sermon the responsibility of both preacher and people. Howe recommends a practical way to secure sermonic feedback from the congregation and provides a generous sprinkling of examples from real life situations.

All of us have our favorite homiletical books—and we should share them with each other. The two mentioned here you will

want to buy for yourself, if you don't already own them. Professors of homiletics at 177 seminaries, as well as countless students, say these are the best.

<div align="right">Chaplain (LTC) Joseph E. Galle</div>

THE OTHER DIMENSION

Louis Dupré

Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1972

If this were not such an important work I would be tempted to accept the warning of a quotation in it from Ludwig Wittgenstein to the effect that one should keep quiet about whatever one cannot talk about intelligently. Since, however, I judge *The Other Dimension* to be the most stimulating, challenging and thorough wrestling with the question of the religious experience to come into print in this decade, I must ignore the advice while confessing some ignorance concerning all the ramifications of the work.

Dupré is a Roman Catholic philosopher; but while this background is evident, the scholarship is small "c" catholic in its appreciative use of sources and willingness to "pre-dream unity." His is an outward-oriented seeking for the truth, which even dares to examine completely negative theology while surveying the territory to be claimed by religion, its symbols and the disciplines which participate in the existence of religion. The text in the book of Revelation concerning going about Zion measuring it came to mind as Dupré aimed his sextant and placed his philosophical and theological stakes.

Because the whole fat (500 pages) volume is a course in theology which will send you scurrying back to books you have almost forgotten and searching for others you have not read, you will do well to buy, not borrow, if you plan to do it justice.

For me the two most fascinating positions were (1) while we cannot fully articulate the truth because it is not confined to the empirical, we are not free to reject reason in religion. All faith demands rationality of some kind. (2) While music, poetry, art and social mythology are attractive models which might be used in *describing* how religion functions, they are not capable of *performing* the function of religion. Religion's function is that of movement toward unifying all realized experiential factors into a sacralized continuum. It is able to move this way because it has grounding and reference points in the boundless.

My only slight dissatisfaction was that I wanted a more extensive development of the idea of human unity as a trans-temporal species whose particularization (shamming as individuality) and isolation (shamming as freedom) are not so much the result of Western secularization as they are the consequences of the Fall.

Chaplain (COL) Bertram C. Gilbert, USA Ret.

BODY AND SOUL

(Gestalt Therapy and Religious Experience)

James Lynwood Walker

Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1971

Body and Soul is a real gem of a book for pastoral counselors who are "seeking permission" to feel good about being interested in and wanting to use modern counseling techniques in their ministry. In his first two chapters, Dr. Walker lays a scholarly exegetical and historical foundation for what follows. His thesis is that there is a great similarity between the religious experience and the therapeutic experience. The two, in fact, ought to be viewed as one experience. He develops this thesis by drawing a parallel between the emphasis upon the "holistic" function as found first in the early Judaic culture and subsequently in Gestalt Therapy as envisioned and fathered by Fritz Perls. He shows how Hellenistic Dualism, which permeated later Judaism and early Christianity, made "Body" a second class citizen in comparison to "Soul." He then evaluates this schizophrenic child of history in the light of Scripture and comes to the conclusion that Gestalt therapy's emphasis on "organismic self-regulation" as a holistic process is more true to the real meaning of religious experience—with particular reference to the Judaic-Christian model—than our emphasis on striving for the "Saintly" at the negation of the "Earthy" (another manifestation of the dualistic approach).

The specific point is repeatedly made that as long as we reject the Body, we are denying ourselves access to the one medium whereby the "holistic" can be experienced, the integration of life can take place, and wherein man can be more nearly "one." Walker is careful to point out that this is an ongoing process which can never be fully achieved at a particular point in time. Rather, it is only as we grow to understand religious experience

as a continuing process of personal crisis and change that we become able to experience significant growth.

Walker makes two meaningful applications of his thesis in the last two chapters of his book, in which he analyzes sexual experience in terms of spirituality and decries technocracy as Utopian progress. In both chapters he shows how man has become removed from "the Body of Life" (because he rejects it) which is the actual root of potential holistic functioning. The Body is our medium in life. Without it we cannot function—even in part. He thus pleads the case that until man accepts again his roots (his Body, the Earth, etc.), no experience—religious or therapeutic (these are not exclusive at this point or even separate)—will succeed in providing growth through integrated functioning.

<div align="right">Chaplain (MAJ) Thomas M. Hill</div>

PRE-VATICAN II PRIESTS AND TODAY'S LITURGY

Are there more changes coming in our Mass in the near future? We hope not. We're still adjusting to those since Vatican II! Oddly enough, the best way to prepare for the future is by delving into the past. This is the main reason for a report on this book.

A Short History of the Western Liturgy by Theodore Klauser (New York: World Publishing Co., 1961) is an authoritative and fascinating answer to the over-40 priest's prayer. The 55 pages of bibliography indicate the vast resources that are funneled and screened onto the pages of this absorbing book.

Klauser takes us all the way back to Jesus and the liturgy. (I wonder whether a liturgical commission would approve the manner in which Jesus offered Mass at the Last Supper!) Our fundamental acts of worship—the Mass, Sacraments, Common Prayer, the Sermon—all go back to Christ, who took some of these acts over from late Judaism.

The primitive Jewish Christian Church enlarged these practices according to the customs of Judaism. Soon after, among Gentile Christians, Graeco-Roman religious practices were "baptized" for Christian use.

Klauser continues as follows: The earliest known liturgical book takes us back authoritatively to about 220 A.D.! So we now know the history of the liturgy during the age of the martyrs. Greek, considered superior to Latin, was the language of Rome for centuries. The Christian Church, therefore, used Greek in its liturgy. Only around 380 A.D. do we find the beginnings of a Latin liturgy, since that language became more and more

the people's language.

Constantine, who reigned from 312 to 337 A.D., performed the marriage ceremony between Church and State. At this time, in all probability, the Church took on the privileges, ceremonials, insignia and dress (vestments) of the imperial court.

For the next 500 years (600—1100 A.D.) Roman leadership yielded to Franco-German influence across the Alps. Pope Gregory the Great, who reigned from 590 to 604 A.D., brought system and order to the Latin liturgy. He unified the prayers of the Mass and the Sacraments; his "Gregorian Chant" lasted well over a thousand years. (It became a Vatican II casualty.) Gregory placed the Lord's Prayer where it is today in our Mass— at the end of the Canon.

Liturgical functions had grown so long that they burdened the people and lessened their devotion. For this reason Gregory dropped the "Prayer of the Faithful," which was picked up again in our own day by Vatican II!

The next 500 years, 1000 A.D. to Trent (1545), witnessed an Italian backlash. Resenting the Franco-German liturgical leadership which had prevailed for centuries, the Popes of Rome took the reins firmly in hand. All dioceses of the Western Church were required to follow Rome's liturgy. The Franciscan Order was largely instrumental in spreading this Roman liturgy throughout the world.

During these centuries something happened to the Mass which proved to have an adverse effect upon the liturgy. With a surplus of priests, private Masses multiplied; the liturgy, which should be a common act of priest and people, slowly became exclusively a priestly function. The people were there, but they were not a part of the sacred action. This was a great change. Previously, people had always been active participators, not merely attentive spectators.

About this time also (1000 A.D.), the priest at Mass began to face the wall rather than the people. The Canon of the Mass became silent, sacred and mysterious. (After nearly 1000 years Vatican II reversed these customs; we now face the people and recite the Canon aloud.)

The Protestant Reformation had a profound effect upon Roman Catholic liturgy, because it brought about the Council of Trent in 1545. Trent's image of the Church of its day was that of a "castle under siege." Consequently, the Mass, the Divine Office and the Roman Ritual were revised and brought into strict uniformity throughout the western world. The Roman Curia exercised vigilant watch and jurisdiction over the liturgy, and the rubricist became a V.I.P.

Although the priests of the time felt these changes strongly, the changes did not affect the laity—which had already been nudged aside by the silent Mass and the Latin Sacraments. They spent their liturgical time in private subjective devotions such as the Rosary, prayers and vernacular hymns. This is the state of liturgy which prevailed during our youth and right up until Vatican II (1964). Every detail pertaining to the Mass was prescribed—from the Latin vesting prayers to the Hail Holy Queen after Mass. Each bow, each Sign of the Cross, every motion and every word were all clearly spelled out. Whether the priest was in India, Africa, Europe or America, he offered Mass in almost exactly the same way.

Almost five hundred years after Trent, Vatican II once again made many drastic and far-reaching changes in our liturgy. Some of these are geared to recapture the Golden Era of liturgy, the early centuries.

Trent had put a cast on the liturgy. Vatican II has taken off this cast. But the leg is still weak; it will take time to regain its strength and elasticity. This is the phase of liturgy in which we find ourselves today.

Klauser's style is scholarly, yet clear and gripping. He hopes to give his readers an "over all view" of the liturgy so that they can better understand the present and future trends and tensions.

This book convinced me that the liturgy never was and never should be fixed and immutable. Change is healthy and should go on constantly. Change should always be for the better, however, and should be based on sound theology and sound psychology.

I also learned that in order to instruct the faithful about liturgical changes, the historical aspect should be stressed. No one feels threatened by history. A conservative Catholic will accept changes more gracefully when he realizes that change has been going on constantly for almost 2000 years.

This book is a much needed shot in the arm for the pre-Vatican II priest. It should help to make us feel great to be a part of it all!

<div align="right">Chaplain (MAJ) Roger T. Dunn</div>

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

Name _____

New Address _____

_____

_____

Old Address _____

_____

Send to: Military Chaplains' Review
                     US Army Chaplain Board
                     Fort George G. Meade, MD   20755

By Order of the Secretary of the Army:

CREIGHTON W. ABRAMS
General, United States Army
Official: *Chief of Staff*
VERNE L. BOWERS
Major General United States Army
The Adjutant General

Distribution:
Special